THE MUSICAL AMATEUR

ROBERT H. SCHAUFFLER

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THE MUSICAL AMATEUR

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A BOOK ON THE HUMAN SIDE OF MUSIC

BY

ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER

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TO MY BROTHER

CHARLES

FIDDLER, CREATIVE LISTENER, AUTOMUSICIAN,

IN GRATITUDE FOR HIS TIRELESS INSTRUCTION
IN THE ART OF THE MUSICAL AMATEUR
AND IN MEMORY OF RARE DAYS
AND NIGHTS WITH OPUS
FIFTY-NINE

PREFACE

THE following pages are addressed to all sorts and conditions of musical amateurs, — the interested listeners, the disinterested players and singers, all who love and make music merely for its own sake, and who would gladly share with others the rich increment of emotion, sensation, and thought which this art brings to life. They are the great democracy of music, — in a sense also its aristocracy, living apart from its commercial and professional side. It does not earn their daily bread, but helps them to enjoy it. The relation of the amateur to music is rather like that of the "gentle reader" and the "delightful letter-writer" to literature. Without such comprehending friends and lovers, without such free disciples and followers (paid only by the pleasure of their service), not one of the arts — and least of all, music — could

really enter into the larger life of the world.

This book champions the cause of musical enthusiasm. It holds that aroused and sustained enthusiasm is the best of all incentives for toil toward the goal of skill and of appreciation. It urges upon parents and teachers the need for their sympathetic recognition of the law of musical evolution at every successive stage of the learner's development. It shows how music in the home may be made a centre of inspiration and delight and social cohesion not alone for the family circle but also for the entire community. It holds that the true listener plays almost as real and vital a part in the making of music as the composer or the performer; that the false listener, on the other hand, is an active agent of destruction; and it points out the way by which every one may become a "creative" listener and an infectious source of "creative" listening. The informal, intimate assimilation of musical culture as an organic part of every amateur's life

is proposed through the cultivation of memory, sight-reading, musical diaries, whistling, and the like, and a chapter is devoted to the dawning science of musical therapeutics.

In short, this is a familiar book upon the strangely neglected human side of music, especially as it concerns the lot of the amateur with its mingled pain and pleasure, plod and play; and as this lot contrasts with that of his less fortunate brother, the professional, and of "the man that hath no music in himself."

One of the writer's aims has been to draw up such a document as a "creative" music-lover might hopefully give to his scoffing, philistine friend in justification of the faith that is in him. Should a single philistine thus be led to give ear to "the universal language," or a single amateur to become a better amateur, the writer would feel himself less unworthy to have been the friend of Walthers, that apostle of true amateurdom whose unique venture is here recorded.

PREFACE

Thanks are due to the *Atlantic Monthly* for permission to reprint chapters II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and XIV, and to the *Outlook* for chapters I, IX, X, and XI.

R. H. S.

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THE MUSICAL AMATEUR

I

THE EVOLUTION OF A MUSICAL AMATEUR

People are not born with a taste for good music. Neither do they achieve it suddenly, nor have it thrust upon them; — that is, unless they happen to be descended from the sort of pristine ancestor who, on some New Year's morning very long ago, suddenly abjured swinging from bough to bough, and arrayed himself in a stand-up collar, and decided to send his daughter to the university.

No. The well-rounded musical amateur is the product of a long evolution. Just as — in Haeckel's view — each adult of us has illustrated in the course of his growth every successive period in the evolution of the race, so the lover of good music has developed his love only by passing through every successive

stage of musical enthusiasm from supreme delight in the rattle solo to supreme delight in, say, the *Choral Symphony*. Grown-ups who have never reached the latter stage are simply examples of arrested musical development.

Thus the story of an amateur's evolution ought to exhibit in miniature—as a dewdrop mirrors the universe —the whole history of the art of music, from its birth in the first rhythmic stampings or inarticulate cries of joy or terror, growing gradually less barbaric and blatant and grossly material and more subtly surcharged with soul as it drew closer to the era of Bach and Beethoven and Brahms.

It is of course undeniable that now and then some one who has shown unusual discrimination in his choice of a grandfather is precocious enough to scramble hurriedly through all these early stages soon after first seeing the light of day. Such was Mendelssohn, who developed into a finished musical cartoonist

before his feet had reached the pedals. Such is Edwin Grasse, the young man with the phonographic musical memory, who, when a blind baby of little more than three, was overheard singing Wagner's *Dreams* in perfect tune while sound asleep, and who at five, after hearing his first Beethoven symphony, went home and played long passages from it on the piano, connecting these with improvisations that sounded like "perfectly good Beethoven" to a well-known conductor who was in the room. Such natures as these, however, are musically far too bright and good "for human nature's daily food." They are the exceptions that prove the rule. They are the handful of long, keen nails that fasten it down securely to the common level.

My own musical development began quite normally by symbolizing the dawn of the art. I propose to outline its history for three reasons: (1) Because it typifies the evolution of a very ordinary sort of amateur; (2) because I happen to know more about this particular

case than about any other; and (3) because there in an intensely practical conclusion to be drawn. In view of which the reader is begged to pardon the necessary first-personality of the narration.

Doubtless the rubber rattle was my earliest love in the instrumental line; but the first that I can definitely recall was a small snare drum, followed by the bones, or "clappers,"—two of the most ancient instruments known to man. It is interesting to observe how often the appetite for music seems restricted to that sort best suited to the limitations of the instrument one happens to play,—especially if the instrument itself be very limited in scope. Think of the range of Bottom's taste, for instance. "I have a reasonable good ear in music," quoth he; "let 's have the tongs and the bones."

Thus, in those days, I scorned all music that was devoid of a rhythm so marked and elemental as to be distinctly drum-able or clap-able. And when the family orchestra

forgathered about the old square piano, armed with an amazing variety of musical appliances, ranging from an Amati violin downward through assorted instruments of defense, of offense, and of torture, my red-letter moment arrived only with the performance of *The Jolly Brothers' Galop.*

Promotion to the tissued comb and its apotheosis, the kazoo, brought with it a slightly more lyric taste. But, as these were rather more playthings than instruments, I still reveled exclusively in the sphere of toy music.

Nor did the advent of the jew's-harp, or "chin-chopper," much expand the horizon. About this time I first encountered a theatre orchestra (at a horse-show, for drama was under the ban), and nearly expired with delight, — not when they did the *William Tell Overture*, which was as so much Greek dialect to me, but in the course of their second number, a "characteristic piece" entitled *A Day in the Farmyard.* The leading spirit

in this piece was the astonishingly versatile man behind the drums. I was convulsed with what seemed to me the exquisitely subtle humor of the triangle, the xylophone, the blocks of sand-papered wood. To the scandal of the neighboring spectators I crowed in loud rapture at the cuckoo, the castanets, the cymbals, bells, and big bass drum that came in when you least expected them. For all of me the art of music was as yet some æons from having reached the stage where Apollo stumbled over the old tortoise-shell with the strand of dried skin stretched across it, — and was moved to invent the lyre.

Some time thereafter I attained to the mouth-organ, which obviously led to its larger, wheezier relative, the accordion. This resplendent vision of nickel trimmings and red-leather bellows it was that weaned me from the rôle of mere supernumerary to be at length an integral part of the family orchestra.

With wonder and joy I still look back to that remarkable amateur organization. As the

groups of men and beasts in the popular scientific books used to portray the descent of man, so our orchestra represented nearly all stages of musical evolution; and these were graduated pretty well according to age. If each member had suited his own taste in the choice of pieces, some remarkable counterpoint would have ensued. We would doubtless have sounded more like one prolonged spasm of tuning-up than we did, or like the several family orchestras which once occupied adjacent apartments in the Tower of Babel and were in the habit of striking up every evening at eight.

But as it was, in our home the more advanced musicians were so wise and kind as to make enormous concessions to us small fry in the matter of taste. They were generous enough to mind not high things, but to condescend to *The Jolly Brothers' Galop* and its ilk a good part of the time. If they had not, we tail-enders would most likely have hated all classical music forthwith, and might

have kept up this hatred indefinitely. As it was, however, when the orchestral hour was done and the elders would begin on Bach duets and Beethoven trios, and other things out of certain big blue books, we youngsters would often hang around watching the flying fingers as curiously as we might have watched a school of flying-fish; or at the worst, with a sort of mild, passive wonder as to what they found in that dull stuff anyway. And all the while, without our suspecting it in the least, those flying fingers were scattering "the dull stuff," like so many ugly little seeds, into our hearts, to rest there quietly until our springtide should come.

Presently a desire for the more human sort of wind instrument overcame me. In an impulsive moment I punctured the base bellows of the accordion (the thing had never been in tune with the piano anyhow. My much-enduring family are all worthy of canonization!), and embraced what dictionaries call the ocarina, and the vulgar call the sweet

potato. This was rather too mild an entertainer. It roared me more gently than any sucking dove.

Therefore it was displaced by the penny whistle — that instrument best-beloved of Robert Louis Stevenson (a person I had never heard of in those days. That, by the bye, as I look back, seems well-nigh the most alluring thing about extreme youth — that it has still before it a first hidden-treasure-digging expedition into the prose works of R. L. S.).

Owing to a mild attack of the war fever, this divine handmaiden of the art was exchanged for a most mundane boxwood fife with leaden mouthpiece attached. From this my affection soon strayed, though keeping consistently within the instrumental family, to the German flute, which lapped me in soft Lydian airs.

But not for long. In taking up the flute I now perceive that I was trying to speed up the deliberate march of evolution to an unnatural gait. Reaction was hastened by re-

ceiving on this instrument my first formal music-lessons, — abominable things that were solely intended, as it seemed to my juvenile understanding, to qualify me with dismaying speed for the position of one who would have no grounds for declining to stand and deliver "the dull stuff" to all perfunctory visitors on demand.

A yet more cogent ground for my devolution to the brazen trump was that the military fever had seized me again, this time with no gentle clutch. And I found the uncertain shrillings of the pipe family far less of a relief for my robust emotions than the convincing brays of the bugle. From the bugle there remained but one short and obvious step to the cornet. This was the point where genuine and enthusiastic study began for me. I devoted myself with hearty zeal to scales and broken chords, and the painful process of developing "a lip," because these things held the promise, not of performing "the dull stuff," which is foreign to the cornet

nature, but of being able, rather, to drown out the balance of the family in deluges of detonation. I had in mind that portion of Scripture which promises that the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised. For, at my then stage of evolution, might spelled right; and in the bright rhyming lexicon of my youth the sole companion word for "joys" was "noise." When the long-suffering family finally drew the line, I organized an orchestra in school, whose crowning ideal of grandeur was a Sousa march commencing *fortissimo*, with each measure handing on the dynamic torch undimmed — and brighter if possible — to its successor.

About this time a secondary passion for technic for technic's sake sprang up within me as well; and this two-fold desire for noise and agility was gratified at school by playing such compositions as the *Bon Ton Overture* at increasing volumes and speeds.

One day the astonishing truth revealed itself that the more tender phases of human

feeling are capable of musical expression. Accordingly, with the headlong exaggeration proper to my years, I entered the sentimental stage. Noise and the gymnastic art dropped some distance below their former proud eminence. The lush in music queened it supreme.

At the music store I found various soulful things for amateur orchestras, like *Hearts and Flowers*, and a composition called *Gondolier and Nightingale*, in which the gondolier, while "gondling" presumably with one hand, plays with the other a cornet solo to one of the nightingales which are well known to abound on Venetian waters, — a solo, each quivering measure of which is like one of those valentines made up to look like transfixed and bleeding hearts. Then the nightingale twitters reciprocations through a piccolo. Whereupon the two melt into each other's song, he intoning the musical equivalent of "I lo-o-o-o-o-o-ve but the-e-e-e-e-ee!" while she broiders the valentine with a paper lace fringe of rapid, airy "Lu-but-thee"s, trail-

ing off into inarticulate trill-tassels. This, at any rate, is how that beloved composition impresses me as I gaze back upon it through the uncertain medium of the years.

Soon I perceived faint, internal promptings toward even higher things. Some of the older brethren had recently come home on a college vacation and played a large amount of "the dull stuff," which had had its subtle effect, though I could not as yet understand or enjoy it appreciably. So, without abandoning the cornet, I was led to unearth the old flute, as being perhaps better adapted for conveying the more delicate shades of emotion. Forthwith I began leading a dual musical life, dividing my allegiance between the soft Lydian airs of the wood, and the harsher but more stirring Dorian of the brass. At this time my taste in overtures leaped from *The Caliph of Bagdad*, which had long ousted the *Bon Ton*, to the *William Tell*, especially the place where all the instruments do a charge

of the Light Brigade. I used to spend petrified hours and all my available nickels hearing Hooligan's Brass Band of New York, London, and Paris perform this charge in the "phonograph parlor" downtown.

One day it occurred to me to get out the big blue books that the others were always so absorbed in on their vacations, and see if, after all, there was really anything in them. I screwed the old flute carefully together, lubricating the joints and squinting down the line of keys just as father always did. I propped a blue book on the square piano, climbed upon the stool, opened at random, and began to play. Almost at once, without any warning, one of the supreme moments of my life was upon me. As I look back it seems comparable alone to that other moment, a few years later, when a curious chemical change seemed to take place within, when something fizzed, gurgled, and evaporated all at once in my brain, and I began actually to enjoy the Milton and Burke

which I had so laboriously come to loathe at school.

I had opened the blue volume by chance to Beethoven's *Adelaide*, and before a dozen bars were done, some mental door flew suddenly open and let in with a rush a crowd of memories. They recalled to me how the others had played this thing on immemorial Christmas vacations and how lovely it had sounded, only I — pig that I was — had never realized it. Page after page of that marvelous book, as each was eagerly snatched over, I found transfigured thus in the light of my sudden maturity; — it appeared sudden to me then; I see now that it had been gradually attained, step after halting step, slow recovery after swift backslide, through the years. It was, indeed, a rare hour. Compared to mine the joys of Cortez and Columbus seemed but as mild drops of gratification in a huge bucket of rapture. If my cup of joy had been as capacious as the tankard out of which the famous old burgomaster

of Rothenburg performed his "master-drink," it would still have overflowed upon the library carpet.

When my breath was all spent, I fell rather than climbed from the stool, burst into my father's study without the prescribed formula of knocks, and rushed into his arms, gasping, "I like the dull stuff! At last, I like the dull stuff!" "Thought it was about time," he murmured.

During the following weeks the blue books absorbed me utterly. Not a single one of those fragments of Mozart and Mendelssohn, Gluck and Schubert, and the others, but seemed now as though it had always been more or less familiar, as though I had even heard the mariners chanting it long ago on "that immortal sea which brought us hither." For all during the barbaric years of bones and whistles and horns I had unconsciously been preparing to adore these bewigged masters of Tone. And now, in the fullness of time, I found them so enthralling

that the family were fain to administer my meals in liquid form, introducing them through the cylinder that so seldom left my lips.

Musically speaking, I had entered the intense age,—that crude period of violent personal crushes that plays such an essential part in man's emotional development. Among the melodious heroes Carl Maria von Weber was my earliest passion. His complete overtures I obtained for flute and piano (*horribile dictu!*), and grew to regard even the one to *Peter Schmoll* as a masterpiece. A consumptive-looking chromo of my adored hung behind the bar of a German saloon on the way to school. By dint of neck-craning I could just make out the lugubrious features through the window. And twice a day I would crane devotedly, make a secret bow, and silently utter a little heartfelt formula which I now perceive to have been almost as genuine idolatry as anything that ever went on upon India's coral strand. And when-

ever I attempted the variations on "God Save the King" which end the *Jubilee Overture*, this emotion was curiously blent with an exalted patriotism.

Fired by Rau's sentimental romance, I transferred my hero-worship to Mozart, though by no means up to appreciating him at his best. His precocity shamed my backwardness, and I almost sprained a lip through redoubled practicing.

Berlioz came next. Though I had never heard a note of his, he captured me by the magnificent self-appreciation of the *Autobiography*. After reading that, I was able to imagine more overpowering strains from the pen of this hero than ever sounded on land or sea, and went about all day with his bulky book on instrumentation under one arm and a score of his *Requiem Mass* under the other.

A severe case of Mendelssohnitis set in after reading the vibrant pages of *Charles Auchester*. But I now was caught in the thrall of the literature about my art, and before

long had finished every musical book in the public library. I reveled in the saccharine sadness that pervades the streets the day after the ball in *The First Violin*, much as previous generations had reveled in the sorrows of Werther. And that remarkable tale of *Nephelé*, by the amateur of music and poetry who wrote "The night has a thousand eyes," possessed the power to entrance me almost as deeply as the two improvising lovers were entranced on the concert stage at the moment of the tragic catastrophe.

Amy Fay brought the settled conviction that life would not be worth dragging along into middle age without a few years of music study in Germany. I drank in every syllable of the Reverend Mr. Haweis's works, without knowing in the least how to discriminate between the truth and the all too frequent error,— between the sentiment and the pale, sickly sentimentality. In fact, I see now that at that period the latter was rather the more welcome.

Also a now neglected American story, called *The Dominant Seventh*, was all in all to me. I used to lie awake half the night, tense with the longing to make one of such a chamber-music party as disported itself in those enticing pages. Whether the pages were well written or ill, I have never known to this day. As far as my adolescence was concerned, they might easily have been penned by one of the immortal nine with a quill plucked from Pegasus. Good art or bad, they were of incalculable service in fixing the glamour of fiddler's lure deep in my young heart.

Despite much reading about symphony orchestras, however, I had never yet seen one. How I longed to! Fevered by the perfervid phrases of Berlioz, I would almost have signed my future away in the blood of a puny forearm to taste an experience to which, two or three evolutionary stages earlier, I could only have been dragged with reluctance, and could have sat out with nothing

better than resignation. But one hour with the big blue books had transfigured the universe. I was orchestra-mad, and used to hang around the music shops in the hope of catching sight of one of those fabulous bassoons or French horns that hovered over my pillow every night. In day dreams and half-day dreams I used to speculate on what "the poignant, acid tone of the oboe" was like, or how the kettledrums sounded, especially when thumped with the sponge-headed sticks so earnestly recommended by Berlioz.

The afternoon of pure, radiant gold without a single atom of alloy, when I played hookey because Theodore Thomas had come to town, stands forth on the page of my youth like a large superbly illuminated capital letter on the — by no means dull — expanse of some mediæval manuscript of adventure. The blessed John on the Isle of Patmos was no more sincerely rapt above this earth than was the wide-eyed little shaver, balanced on the extreme edge of his seat in the balcony,

when the French horns (of all instruments!) opened the programme — and Brahms's *Second Symphony* — with their tender, mellow, smiling call, or when the oboe acidly piped forth its delicious *pastorale*. And I recognized these people of my dreams just as if it had actually been my lot to arrive on earth trailing a modest cloudlet from among the clouds of glory that form a stage for the largest orchestra mentioned in literature. As for Brahms, he was a brand-new experience, yet every note was a joy. For nobody had already taken the trouble to explain that he was muddy, abstruse, uninteresting, and extremely hard to make head or tail of.

The story of how the boyish taste went on developing after this experience, and how it found itself a more musical companion and helper in the 'cello, shall be deferred to the following chapter.

Here I would merely point out that I, for one, was never taken to listen to a large orchestra against my will, and never heard one

at all until evolution had tuned me quite up to symphony concert pitch. So that, when it finally came, this experience had the quality of a vivid revelation. Children should, of course, hear the best music from early youth up, but they should be allowed to absorb it casually, unconsciously, as I was allowed to absorb "the dull stuff." There is to me something positively revolting in the thought of cramming a poem by Milton or a symphony by Beethoven down a child's throat before he is in the least ready for it. The chances are that he will for years, and perhaps for ever, entertain a prejudice against that particular kind of diet.

A large amount of needless indifference to good music, and even active hatred for it, is caused by putting children at dry piano scales and Czerny-with-the-metronome before ever they have developed a single spark of enthusiasm for the classic beauty to which the excellent Czerny is such an obvious and supple finger-post. To do this is to teach them to re-

gard the choicest portions of musical literature as all of a piece with the literature of the spelling-book. This is a serious mistake, because it threatens to dry up the sources of their enthusiasm. And enthusiasm is the very life and soul of the musician. Without it, though he may learn to run Liszt cadenzas almost as swiftly and precisely as any mechanical piano, he will never, in this life, develop into a good player. Enthusiasm, in the last analysis, is the only thing that ever made a real interpreter. Without it, the student can only become at best a fallible human automaton. To speak of an unenthusiastic musician is to utter a contradiction in terms.

As Czerny, therefore, is such a kill-joy, a child's enthusiasm should be given a generous head-start of him in the musical race. The education of young ears should be begun long before the education of young fingers. Then, even though the child may never turn out to be one of the few chosen to perform music, he will probably turn out, if educable

at all, to be one of that even smaller and more urgently-needed class — the noble army of creative listeners.

It is not music, as Horace intimated, but rather the enthusiasm for music, that is the *laborum dulce lenimen*, the sweet solace of toil. This alone can make the dry, ugly scales and *études* seem but the rough cobblestones leading to the enchanted castle. By beginning with the child's fingers the teacher puts his musical future "to the touch, to gain or lose it all." By beginning with his ears it is hardly possible for him to "lose it all." A great deal of nonsense is talked nowadays about the necessity for taking the fingers when they are young and supple. I believe that, generally speaking, they are quite as young and supple as is necessary at fourteen or fifteen; and that a single hour of practice, reinforced by the enthusiasm of one who has his eyes fixed on the lure of the enchanted castle, — the lure of chamber-music parties and amateur sym-

phony orchestras, — is worth fifty hours of forced and grudging grind. The teacher who begins at the wrong end and attempts to hasten matters by resolutely driving a child out of the jew's-harp stage as if he were a trespasser there, straight into the Beethoven sonata stage, stands to spoil his victim's chances of being either a passable listener or player for good and all.

This does not mean, of course, that nobody should be suffered to study an instrument before he has arrived at the sonata stage of appreciation. It means only that children should never be set at music as they are set at a stint of weeding in the garden. Only get them mad enough over the lure of the thing and convince them that there is no royal road to the enchanted castle, and wild horses cannot prevent them from wearing down the cobble-stones that lead thither. Would the old master one reads about have made such an excellent spinet player if he had had his infant nose held down to the instrument for

ten hours a day instead of having been forbidden on any account to touch the thing until he was much older, and having had to practice it up in the attic in fear and trembling with one eye on the door?

In my opinion the parent with musical ambitions for his offspring should be evolutionist enough to recognize and respect the child's successive stages of development, and should perhaps even supply him with instruments of more or less humility suited to the various stages, so that he may exhaust the enthusiasm proper to each period as fully and rapidly as possible. Above all, the child should not be forced. For if he should, for any reason, skip even one stage, he might go back later and make up the lapse at considerable loss of headway, much as I went back for a time from the flute to blat upon the strident cornet. Papa Haydn had the right idea. He concocted a *Kinder* Symphony which the children could perform together upon the musical playthings proper to their various

stages of evolution, and thus derive the maximum of profit from each stage. He also took care not to make the symphony so beautiful as to stimulate a false satisfaction with toy music.

Theodore Thomas was blessed with the insight to see that the adult children, as well, who composed his audiences must be gradually educated. And so he besprinkled the symphony programmes of his early concerts with plentiful *Spring Songs* and *intermezzi* from *Cavalleria* and *Beautiful Blue Danubes*. And when he had made the people happy with something like this and had diverted their minds from the conscious and painful pursuit of musical culture, he would slip in one of the things that were not written for an age but for all time. This would produce on them no obvious impression whatever, either positive or negative. But some fine day, years later, they would wake up to find that the thing was their very own.

So, too, should the little ones be educated. Into their preoccupied, unsuspecting systems

should be introduced from time to time in capsule form a wide selection from the classics. The children should be given to understand that they are not expected to appreciate these things now, but that some fine day, when they are quite ready for the change, the crude and violent pleasures they now enjoy in *A Day in the Farmyard* will be succeeded by a deeper, though more delicate and subtle sort of pleasure, — a far more alluring, compelling, lasting kind than anything they have ever known; and that this fine day will most likely break upon them without warning and bowl them over somewhat as a great light once bowled over a little tent-maker on the road to Damascus.

Having now traced the development of a youthful amateur's passion for music, let us consider more fully this question of musical enthusiasm: its pleasures, its pains, and other varied aspects, as they affect older performers and listeners.

II

FIDDLER'S LURE

Old King Cole is known to most of us as a lazy, idle fellow, who never did anything but sprawl in a luxurious Maxfield Parrish throne while others fetched and fiddled for him without ceasing. Hence, we infer, came his "merry old soul."

He has been grossly misrepresented. The true key to his famous *Gemüthlichkeit* may be found in the fact that he played the 'cello. For what more could any amateur of chamber music desire than that which lay forever at his beck and call? In one of his posthumous poems the king declares, —

> "A Stradivarius underneath the bow,
> A pipe, a stein, to give the music 'go,'
> My fiddlers three and opus fifty-nine :[1]
> This is the merriest paradise I know."

[1] Beethoven's three string quartets, opus fifty-nine, are usually regarded by amateur fiddlers as their *Ultima Thule* of difficulty and of delight.

What I most admire in Cole is that he was not carried to these musical skies "on flow'ry beds of ease," like Hermes, who, as Jacob Grimm declares, "was born early in the morning, and played the lute at mid-day." He idled along no royal road to opus fifty-nine. There was none. In his day there was as yet no telomelo-'cello to be operated by an electric button. In the sweat of his youthful brow he earned his merry old soul. Alone, with bow in hand, it was his to do battle with those giants Grützmacher and Giese, the Czernys of the 'cello. He waded *solo*, in the wake of his humblest subjects, through the "bloody seas" of Duport and Romberg. For him the raw fingertip, the twice furrowed thumb, and the chronic crick in the back of the neck. Not only this. He was actually handicapped in the race. For corporate expansion had already passed so far beyond the royal control that, when he played, his arms stuck straight out in front like those of the large 'cellist in the Thomas Orchestra whom we used to call "The Frog."

Such were King Cole's difficulties, such his incentives for toil, — and they were the most dazzling incentives that any learner of musical lore could have. Before his eyes hovered the enchanted castle of Chamber Music, fitted out with fiddlers three, with the Beethoven parts waiting on the racks, and merely a 'cellist lacking to complete the magic circle. It was a goal more glamorous than any vision of initialed sweaters that ever lured the sore, disheartened little quarter-back to let himself be battered about on the scrub a week longer. Only there was this difference, — that the royal pilgrim toward Beethoven's candy-kitchen had been sustained, almost from the first step, on crumbs of the bulky sweets of his aspiration.

And how luscious and satisfying such crumbs are! How far more indulgent is Papa Haydn to weak, groping fingers and stiff wrists, than is the man of wrath who divided all Gaul into "three halves," to the tender victim of *amo, amas, amat.* As for me, I

know that when I began the 'cello I never could have weathered the blasts of Dotzhauer, or the fogs of Franchomme, or held a middle course between the scales of Scylla and the double-stops of divine Charybdis, without the tender pilotage of those makers of music, great and small, whose it is to inspire and guide little keels through the troubled sounds of apprenticeship. But I anticipate.

At fifteen, after the checkered musical career outlined in the previous chapter, I was still devotedly tootling the German flute, which seemed to me the divinest of instruments. Then, one morning, I chanced upon an old 'cello in the attic, and an instruction-book with a long strip of paper which, pasted under the strings, promised a short-cut to virtuosity; for it pointed out exactly where to put each finger. A few tentative experiments and I fell devoted slave to this strange mechanism. My history now resembled that of "Joy" in Collins's ode on *The Passions*, who —

"First to the lively pipe his hand addrest :
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best."

A week of furtive practice convinced me that I could play the 'cello, though I now remember grasping the bow like a tennis-racket and the fingerboard like a trolley-strap. I found one of those jolly trios which Gurlitt so obligingly wrote in notes of one syllable, forgathered with a couple of schoolmates, — a brother and sister who played the violin and piano, — and leaped like a flash into King Cole's paradise.

Now, as before remarked, the amateur's appreciation of music is apt to keep a definite relation to the character of the instrument he happens to play, and to his proficiency thereupon. And my very first stammerings upon the 'cello prepared me to be delighted with pieces whose juvenile simplicity, I, as a flexile flutist, would have laughed to scorn.

No effect of the concert stage has ever enthralled me more than that first chord of ours,

when I heard the 'cello tone mingle deliciously with the violin tone, and realized that my bow had made such blending possible. The flute notes had never really mixed with others, but had stood apart by themselves, crystalline, cold, aloof; and perhaps my nature had taken its cue from the flute. But that first trio venture changed everything. There first I tasted the delights of real harmony, — and sealed eternal friendship, before parting, with the little girl who played the piano. Along with democracy and puppy-love, the 'cello came into my life. Heralded so impressively, no wonder it tangled its strings hopelessly among those of my young heart.

For a time I kept on indulging in Gurlitt and considering myself a master. Then I went West to live with Walthers, an enthusiastic amateur violinist, — and experienced a severe shock. For I learned what adult chamber music was. Gurlitt fell from my eyes like scales, and the conviction came that once I could hold a part in the trios of Gade or the quartets

of Rubinstein I might be gathered contentedly to my fathers; I would have warmed both hands before the fire of life, and could then anticipate nothing but carrying out the ashes.

Spurred thus, I found a teacher and unlearned the empirical method with groanings which cannot here be uttered; while ambition was kept in vigorous health by Walthers's nightly *séances* of chamber music with more accomplished players than I.

Finally the dreamed-of moment came. I was permitted to try my hand. The others suffered in silence. As for me, from then on life held a gluttonous measure of unalloyed bliss. The delights of that performance could not have been more thrilling to me if, with true Orphic cunning, my instrument had caused the dining-table to rustle its leaves and the cat to perform on the hearth-rug the dance of the seven veils. I could play the notes — most of them — loud and clear. What more does the hardened amateur demand from life? For the second time I supposed myself

a master, and was ready to sing my *Nunc dimittis*, — and to practice cheerfully three hours a day.

Then I heard a professional quartet. The flame of mere sound and fury set for me. Kneisel and Schroeder with the host of heaven came. And lo! creation widened in my view. With amazement I began to realize the subtle potentialities of tone-color, the fascinations of dynamics; and the fact that to me the word *pianissimo* had been an almost meaningless expression. I began to count that musical self-assertiveness almost indecent which fiddles away forever with a noise like the sound of many waters; and to wonder why, whenever the average amateur meets with the sign *sf* under his music, he is apt to look so much harder at the *f* than at the *s*. My heart leaped up in response to that complete *ensemble*, — four bows with but a single thought, — to the variety of the tonal effects, to the technic so taken for granted that it never revealed itself or its basal sheep-

gut, horsehair, and resin. Here at last, to set final bounds for aspiration, was the authentic oracle of Apollo, — and the practice hours accordingly aspired from three to six.

After the first few enthusiastic years of dalliance with chamber music one finds that he is becoming less and less easily lured. His musical palate grows more discriminating. It takes a Brahms to-day to brim the cup of joy which a Raff then sweetly overflowed. As for those garbled symphonies and operas, — the transcriptions at which one once fiddled away so happily and in such good faith, — to-day one is callous enough to brand them as "derangements."

Nevertheless, as I look back through the years to that time, three significant facts emerge. In the first place, it is clear that I never would have persevered in all that painful practice without the weekly reward of "virtuosity" when, every Saturday afternoon, little Miss Second Violin and dear big Mr. Viola came from town and were rushed out

of their overcoats and had their hands warmed with jubilant massage and then were plumped down before the G major Mozart and hardly allowed time for preliminary caterwaulings before Walthers's firm command came, "No ante-mortems!" and his "*three-four*" detonated, and at last we were outward bound for fairy-land.

Yet even *that* Mozartian reward — joyous as it was — would scarcely have kept me so long on the rack of the thumb-positions, or doubled up in the chromatic treadmill, had it not been for the "far-off, divine event" symbolized by the opus fifty-nine, gleaming just within the portals of King Cole's castle.

Ah, there is nothing like a taste of chamber music to make the idle apprentice industrious. It is the real fiddler's lure, — the kindly light that has the power to lead him o'er musical moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the dusk of mere technic merges into the dawn of attainment. I sometimes

wonder why American parents do not realize what kind of love it is that makes the musical world go round. German parents do — and that leads to my secondly.

German parents know, also, that there is nothing better for the unity of the home than the sport of chamber music. To associate the hearth in the children's minds with the intimate, exquisite democracy of *ensemble*, with the rapture of perpetually new achievement, with the spirit of beauty and an ever growing appreciation of that spirit, is to go far toward insuring the success of the family, and even the solidarity of the neighborhood.

Chamber music as a home sport can accomplish yet more. Who can doubt, in the third place, that fiddler's lure helps in smoothing the child's way through life? For the experienced amateur of chamber music, go where he will, even in our demi-musical country, is sure of a welcome. His bow is a master key to many doors. And the welcome is not always for the fiddle alone. It is often still

more hearty for the fiddler. Because the democracy, the constant give-and-take of the quartet and trio and sonata has extracted a deal of the stiffness and conceit and dogmatism from him and left him more human and more diplomatic.

Besides all these advantages, his talent adds a perpetual sparkle of romance — real or potential — to what might otherwise have turned out a hopelessly dun existence. You never can tell what friend-ever-after may not come rushing up to you after a concert with glowing face and outstretched hand to announce himself. (I know a man who first beheld his wife across the footlight candles as he was ending an amateur flute solo.) A certain 'cellist was once snowbound for three hours at a small railroad station. He unpacked his 'cello and played his dozen fellow sufferers a request programme, with the result that one of them took him to Europe for a year. You never can tell, as you bear your precious fiddle-box through the streets, what magic

casement may not open on the foam (of steins), and what faery hand may not beckon you within to do the one thing needful to opus fifty-nine, or draw a valiant bow in the battle of Schumann Quintet.

True amateurs of chamber music do not often have to be formally introduced. Theodore Thomas used to declare that he could tell a violinist from a 'cellist on the street by the swing of his arms. By kindred signs so subtle as to escape the layman, initiates recognize each other everywhere. And it is this world-wide confraternity of fiddlers that makes travel for the true amateur such a joyous series of adventures.

It is particularly joyous, of course, in Germany, where every third house holds a devotee ready to welcome a brother chamber musician with open arms. In Doctor Hale's famous story, the belated traveler through a hostile countryside had merely to murmur "In His name," and hospitable hearths blazed for him like magic. But in certain German

villages, if you are really of the elect, you need not say a word. You have merely to whistle some theme from opus fifty-nine.

During many years I have cherished an alluring plan for a sort of musical Inland Voyage. The outfit would comprise fiddlers three who would have to be kindred spirits of mine, a house-boat, a complete library of chamber music, — and a cook. Then we would float down some beautiful German river, the Elbe, say, or the Neckar, and sit playing quartets on the sunny deck until we came to a village that looked unmistakably chamber-musical. There we would land and invite all the local members of our great confraternity to repair to us. With them — yea, even unto the limits of the loathed nonet — we would perform mightily before the populace assembled on the shore, until it pleased us to cast off and drift down to adventures new.

Our craft should bear three inscriptions. Round about the prow we would write, —

"To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign."

The Faerie Queene would furnish the motto astern: —

> "Ne care, ne feare I, how the wind do blow,
> Or whether swift I wend, or whether slow."

And, fluttering so high aloft as not to rhyme with Omar's injunction, a pennon would proclaim

> "Music does all our joys refine
> And gives the relish to our wine."

Perhaps we should be arrested as unofficial vagrants and haled on shore to pay a fine of twelve cents and a half. Perhaps, even more delightful, some famous composer whom we had all loved from afar might be summering at one of the river *Dörfer*, and might board us and enter into the spirit of the quest, and, with his revered feet, like as not, trailing in the water back by the tiller, would then and there compose and dedicate with heartfeltest representations of his imperishable esteem to the high-well-born Fiddlers-four, his destined-to-be-world-famous Vagabondia Quartet. But alas! I fear me that the Musical Inland Voy-

age, fraught as it is with rich possibilities in the way of music and life, — and magazine articles, — is destined to be the booty of fatter purses and more golden pens than mine.

At any rate, let us have done with the utilitarian side of fiddler's lure, — its toil-persuading, home-solidifying, friend-attracting, romance-compelling attributes. The royal sport I would sing for its own sake.

Why is *ensemble* music the sole recreation definitely promised us in the future life? Obviously because it combines the most fun with the fewest drawbacks. Milton, indeed, goes so far as to give the angelic musicians "harps ever tuned," thereby reducing the drawbacks to zero. True, we hear something of these harps being played *en masse*, which smacks more of orchestral than of chamber music; though I cherish a hope that these masses are merely proportioned to the size of the chambers in the upper mansions. However this may be, we can rest assured that there wait above, the nobler delights of the

string quartet, though reserved, perhaps, for those sainted capitalists, those plutocrats, of bliss who have on earth laid up the fattest dividends in heaven through dynamic self-abnegation when it was the other fellow's turn for a solo. For has not Melozzo da Forli immortalized for us on the walls of St. Peter's a small combination of angelic amateurs who are having a simply heavenly time —

> Where quartet-parties ne'er break up
> And evenings never end?

By referring to "the nobler delights of the string quartet," I mean that chamber music has a number of advantages over orchestral. There is the literature, for example. The majority of the classic composers have been more happily inspired when writing for the smaller groups of instruments, and I know of three quartets and one trio for every symphony of equal musical worth. *Vivitur parvo bene*, indeed, in the musical *camera*.

The string quartet possesses another little realized advantage over the orchestra: it can

play in perfect tune. It can follow the natural law decreeing that G sharp is eternally different from A flat. It does not have to "temper" the wind to the shorn bassoon like the orchestra, which finds its tonal life by losing it. For the latter, to secure concord among those baser instruments worked by keys, compromises by taking a nondescript, hybrid note and declaring it to be *both* G sharp and A flat, that is, both white and black, though its mongrel gray is palpable.

Besides these literary and scientific advantages, — the boon of playing "where Art and Nature sing and smile," — the quartet has the added advantage of democracy. Now, the orchestra is a monarchy, if not a tyranny, and is aristocratic to its very bow-tips; but in the republic of the string quartet there are no wretched hewers of wood and drawers of water. All men are free and equal. And though the first violin may sparkle, the 'cello wear its heart on its sleeve, and the viola sigh out its mystic soul to the moon with more

abandon, perhaps, than the fourth member, yet *Secondo* knows that he is quite as important as any of his brothers. *Liberté, égalité, fraternité.* These make the quartet as fertile of friendships as the rush-line. There is a constant give-and-take among the members, a constant pocketing of one's personal thunder in favor of the man with the message of melody.

And then the humor of the thing, — the infinite varieties of incongruity that are always popping up. There are the accidents, for instance; as when grave and reverend signor 'cello sits splash into a musical puddle; or, at the uttermost tension of his fine, careless rapture, the first violin's E string slips slowly to earth with a most unmusical, most melancholy yowl. There is the endless play of humor in the music itself, and the sudden droll resemblances of the players to non-musical groups of the philistine world outside, as when the miscellaneous group of amateurs in *Somehow Good* reminded De Morgan of a

court scene, in "the swift pertinence of the repartees of the first violin to the second, the apt *résumé* and orderly reorganization of their epigrammatic interchanges by the 'cello and the double-bass, the steady typewritten report and summary of the whole by the pianoforte, and the regretful exception to so many reports taken by the clarionet."

A most convincing proof of the joy-giving qualities of chamber music is the attitude of the professional musician toward it. One rarely hears of the reporter haunting the police court during off hours, or of the mail-carrier indulging in a holiday walking-tour. But many a jaded teacher and slave of the orchestra finds his real *raison d'être* in turning amateur for an hour or two and playing chamber music "for fun."

I crossed once on a German liner which had an excellent orchestra among the stewards. This was kept at a surprisingly high standard, though the members were overwhelmed with menial occupations as hard on

a fiddler's fingers as on his temperament; I still remember the pang it cost to see the artist who had just been leading the *Unfinished Symphony* so divinely, staggering along with a pail of slops. But the spirit of the true chamber-musician is Antæan. It developed that the men had formed a quartet, and every evening that they were in port they practiced together after the severe toil of the day, "just for fun." My old viola-playing steward touched me not a little when he inquired if I had ever come across "the miracle-quartets of Mozart." With the flashing eye of youth, he told how he and his comrades had discovered them a few weeks before. "Und now," he cried, "to blay dem over eveninks — dat iss all what we live for!" When it comes to comparative capacities for pleasure, however, the amateur, with his fresher, keener musical appetite and unimpaired digestion, can usually give odds to the professional. In my opinion, the real earthly paradise is the amateur quartet party.

There remains a perfect memory of such an experience in one of the loveliest parts of Canada, at the home of two brothers, good friends, good fiddlers, and good fellows. As second violinist we had the best professional in that part of the Dominion. For one swift fortnight in that old mansion, girt with lawns and woods and waters, surrounded by congenial souls and the rare warmth of old-time Canadian hospitality, I tasted an experience that now seems like a visit to the Avilion of some other existence. Quartets were interwoven with lacrosse; eager talk with forest excursions and trios and tennis; sonatas with swims; poetry with pantry-parties; canoeing with quintets. Though our standards were not quite as lofty as those of professionals — such as they were, we were actually attaining them; and what artist ever does that?

Never, since our bows trembled on that last, poignant cadence of opus fifty-nine, have I enjoyed another such musical lark. And I sometimes wonder why it is that we American

amateurs are so long-facedly academic over our music; why we do not extract more fun from it. Certainly we possess three of the prime requisites for enjoying the quartet: love of adventure, good nerve, and that ready sympathy for the other fellow's point of view, which is vulgarly known as "sporting blood."

One of the chamber musician's chief delights is to "read,"—to spread out on the racks the crisp new parts, take a deep breath, and strike out with his mates into uncharted waters, tensely strung as a captain in the fog, now shaving a sunken rock, now becalmed on a languorous mirror, now in the grip of a hurricane off a lee shore. Or, if the adventure prove not so desperate as this, at least one feels the stimulus, the constant exciting variety as in a close game of tennis, where — no matter what the emergency — one can exultantly depend upon himself to take measures not wholly inadequate to the occasion.

And, as in tennis doubles, there is that same strange, wireless, telepathic something

shuttling back and forth between the comrades in the venture, — urging, cautioning, praising, advising with lightning speed, saving the other from utter disaster by a hair, adding, bar for bar, the ineffable commentary of the subliminal, — a thing more akin than aught else I can imagine to the communion of disembodied spirits.

More memorable yet, the experience when the mysterious waves of these soundless words break beyond the little excited circle of players, seemingly so intent upon the notes alone, — and compel the listeners; bending them to the music's mood.

Most other-worldly of all it is when, in playing with those near and dear, these waves go forth and find among the hearers such capacious, creative, resonant spirits that they recoil in tenfold volume to overwhelm the players, so that time and space and the feel of bow and finger-board go utterly lost and the very presence of the instrument passes, and, rapt out of touch and sight, one's self

is only such another medium for the soul's expression as are the throbbing strings themselves. Then it is that —

> In ways unlike the labored ways of earth —
> One knows not how —
> That part of man which is most worth
> Comes forth at call of this old sarabande
> And lays a spirit hand
> With yours upon the strings that understand.

Your painter-friend over yonder in the corner with closed eyes, — how he is offering all the tender, sonorous, melting, glowing resources of his young palette to color the music that stirs beneath your unconscious fingers. And there in the doorway leans the pale sculptor, the wonder-worker who can, 'from the sterile womb of stone, raise children unto God.' In every fibre you feel that he is there, —

> To make that sarabande in form more fair.

See in the far window-seat our lady of song. How the string voices broaden, turn canorous under her silent gaze! Brother, can you not feel the very heart of the music pulse faster, —

As our dear poet with the glowing eyes
Brings to the shrine of tone his evening sacrifice?

Ah! lure of lures, indeed, — the memory of incomparable hours like these

When our sheer souls, in the immortal way,
Have uttered what our lips might never say;

— the hope of hours yet in store when — as in no other way earth offers — we may "feel that we are greater than we know."

III

THE CREATIVE LISTENER

How is an artist going to make a masterpiece unless the public makes half of it? — SENHOUSE, in *Halfway House*.

SVENGALI never really hypnotized Trilby, and where the book says so it is merely indulging in poetic hyperbole. The fact is, Svengali was such a master of the art of listening that, whenever he was in the audience, Trilby could not help singing better than she knew how. Too bad that the dramatic requirements forced the author to make him such a horrid old villain! Otherwise he might have stood as the classic type of that most inspiring and necessary and admirable person, the creative listener.

Though very few realize it, there is nothing uncanny or very difficult about the practice of creative listening. A few weeks of work that is more than half play will fit almost

anybody to be as organic a part of the concert performance as is the business-like little man behind the drums, or the shaggy being who breathes vernal zephyrs into the French horn.

Wagner called true listeners natural-born poets. Now, while it is true that creative listeners, like poets, are born and not made, yet far more of the former are born. In fact, nearly everybody enters life with possibilities along this line. And how is any deaf, inglorious dummy in the audience to know whether or not he was intended to be the Milton of listening until he has given his intellect a chance at the possibly latent gift? Just as plow-boy poets must, some time or other, quaff at the fount of metrics and form, so the best of natural listeners have to learn the science of their art before they can be called finished artists.

These facts are, as yet, known only to the initiated few. And this is where the fun of writing about creative listening comes in.

Because, while music is by all odds the pet art of humanity, humanity has at present such a wistful, hopeless attitude towards it.

The ordinary person regrets few things more in life than his inability to play or sing. Or, if he does play or sing, he regrets all the more wistfully his inability to play or sing *well*. He calls music "the universal language" and, unless he can talk it loud and clear, he looks as pathetically shamed as the after-dinner orator who, after mute agonies, sinks back into the poignant silence without having been able to utter a syllable.

Look closely enough during any concert and you will see, hovering above the audience, the sad smoke of heart-burning. The folk in the plush seats are sick for self-expression. They yearn to bear a hand in the divine game. They, too, would be "all glorious in song,"—pitiful, barren souls that they suppose themselves to be, grieving like Lamb, the lonely bachelor, for their "dream-children."

To all such mourners it is my delightful privilege to explain that their dream-children need not be compacted of dreams alone; — to hold out the promise of an art whereby they may become as creative as that great hearer whom Wagner once thanked for the inestimable gift of *Tristan*, implying that she listened to his playing as mightily "as Brünnhilde listened to Wotan."

It takes two to make music: one to perform; one to appreciate. And he is wise, indeed, who can discern which of the two is the more important.

Now, in olden times it would not have occurred to any one to decide the relative claims of performer and listener, because when the arts were young they were such intensely democratic affairs. No distinction was drawn between artist and audience, for all men were alternately artist and audience.

Even to-day in some of the more primitive parts of the world no social function is complete until the psaltery has passed from

hand to hand, or the harp with the solemn sound, or whatever the local instrument chances to be, and each member of the circle has extemporized a song to his own accompaniment. Such functions are reminders of the good old days when all men were free and equal in the realm of music, — when, even though the other fellow happened to be performing, you kept on listening to the music with the player's active sense of creation, but unembarrassed by his handicaps.

Then after a while an aristocratic thing called technic came, and seemed to fix an unbridgable gulf between player and listener. Hence the wistfulness of modern concert audiences who gaze across this gulf to the realms of gold on the other side with as poignant a longing in their eyes as if they had once been driven out of them by a flaming sword.

At this sad stage of the proceedings enters science to declare this gulf a figment of the modern imagination, — to show that the audience is a more integral part of the perform-

ance than it has ever suspected. The recent tendency of scientific thought is to explain man's craving for artistic expression along social rather than individualistic lines; to discuss the apparently passive function of the appreciator in active, creative terms.

A bird's-eye view of this speculation is so essential to a proper understanding of the art of creative listening that there is here proposed to my more vigorous readers a brief but stony and rather steep scramble among the foothills of æsthetics. Non-climbers please skip.

A number of prominent European thinkers have come to believe that when we enjoy a statue, for instance, we unconsciously imitate its pose and suggested movements. Not only with our eyes but also, in a rudimentary way, with our whole bodies do we follow its outlines. We feel our way into the statue physically as well as mentally so as to incorporate it into our actual experience. And thus with the products of the other arts as well.

With unsuspected thoroughness we insinuate ourselves into the appreciation of them. Our very bodies resound the rhythms of Rembrandt and Shakespeare, of von Steinbach and Beethoven.

Every one has experienced his body's tendency to feel its way into music by nodding or tapping time to it. And I believe that most of us may detect in our throats or lips, even when we merely think of a tune, certain slight, involuntary contractions or puckerings which are the rudimentary attempts of our subconscious selves to sing or whistle in imitation. And not alone do our bodies thus try to reproduce reality; they even imitate our ideals. Witness the unconscious contortions of the billiard-player as his cue-ball misses the other by a hair.

This imitation theory of art appreciation has been of service to the Finlander, Yrjö Hirn, in his brilliant, pioneer work of demonstrating how social a thing the creative impulse is. He believes that art came into

existence chiefly because it is natural for every "feeling-state" to "manifest itself externally." This process tends, in the first place, to heighten the artist's pleasure and relieve his pain. And, because "art is essentially social," it tends, in the second place, to "awaken similar feelings in other human beings who perceive the manifestation; and their sympathetic feeling reacts upon the author of the original manifestation . . . heightening in him the feeling-state which gave rise to it."

Years ago Emerson's prophetic vision caught a glimpse of this truth and embodied it in the splendid passage in which he spoke of "that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakespeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought."

Hirn explains how the sympathetic response of the appreciator is greatly intensified

by the sort of unconscious imitation which we have been considering; and how it recoils back from the appreciator to the creator and back again to the appreciator, and so on, back and forth, growing in stimulating power at each recoil. The whole process is like a hot "volley" in tennis, with the opponents closing in on each other and the ball shuttling across the net faster with every stroke as the point gains in excitement and pleasure. "Social resonance" might be a good way of describing the thing. And it resounds more effectively in music than in any other art.

There is a vast difference between the creative appreciator who feels his way into a statue, cathedral, or painting, and the creative listener to a musical — or dramatic — performance. However fully the former may project himself into the statue and resound its rhythm, his feelings cannot alter the finished marble in the least; although of course the expectation of his sympathy may have stimulated the sculptor in his

modeling, or the memory thereof may lift him to higher flights in future work. Still, the appreciator is powerless to affect the stone as it stands on the pedestal, simply because a statue cannot be recreated like a symphony.

Music, on the other hand, is a sort of chronic Nicodemus. It must be born again whenever it would enter into the kingdom of the human soul.

It is exactly this necessity that makes the listener so important a factor in music; for every listener in some way affects the quality of its reproduction. And if he is a mighty man of creative valor he can even reduce the player or singer at times to a mere vehicle for what science would call the "exteriorization" of his own emotion, as Svengali reduced Trilby.

The performer is the violin string, and the listener, the resonant body of the instrument. Without the wooden sounding-box the strand of sheep's-gut would strike ludicrously thin

upon the ear. Without the string the music would be mute.

Thus, though the player first makes audible the poetry of the universal language, his recitation will not be effective without the coöperation of the creative listener. The two are absolute correlatives. The beautiful thing is that the more such a listener receives, the more he gives. Mundane music would soon come to be a fitting overture to the music of the spheres if our audiences were composed wholly of listeners like Wagner's friend, or even like the man I once read of in *The Hibbert Journal*: "a most pitiable cripple, shipwrecked in all save the noble intelligence," who "hobbled away from the hearing of a Beethoven symphony exclaiming, 'I have heard that music for the fiftieth time; you see what I am; yet with this in my soul I go down Regent Street a god!'"

After all, what is this strange give-and-take in the world of art but a fair symbol of the larger give-and-take of life? "Our souls,"

said Balzac, in *Eugénie Grandet*, "live by giving and receiving; we have need of another soul. Whatever it gives us we make our own, and give back again in overflowing measure. This is as vitally necessary for our inner life as breathing for our corporeal existence." Nay, more; creative listening is a sort of prayer. When we really pray, do we not strive to do to the Infinite Harmonist something very like that which the creative listener does to the musician? Who does not believe that his own prayers, in some mysterious way, actually help to compass their fulfillment? And have we not from childhood up been prepared to trust that "on the heaven-side bank of the River of Death" the functions of prayer and of creative listening are fused forever in one?

Perhaps it is not yet clear why any mere listener to music should be dignified by the royal title of "creative." Now, just as the supremely creative thing about the great composer is his ability to store up emotion on

music-paper, and the creative thing about the great player is his ability to liberate this emotion by mingling with it his own, — so the creative thing about the great listener is his ability to saturate this complex of emotion with his own and return it to the player in the form of heightened inspiration. At each step of this process the music is born again.

Who will deny that Svengali is at least as creative as the lady to whom he listens?

"The potential poet or painter," says our Finlander in speaking of the appreciator of art, "whose embryo work is bound to remain forever a fact only of his own experience . . . is not aware that he is composing a poem or a picture for himself as spectator or audience. Instinctively, however, he pursues . . . an end which is essentially similar to that of the actually creating artist. In both these cases . . . the creative activity aims at making an emotional mood independent of the accidental and individual conditions under which it originally appeared."

All this, applied to a 'cello recital, for instance, would mean that the creative listener is unconsciously endeavoring with might and main to help the 'cellist overcome his spiritual handicap in being more or less preoccupied with his fingers, his wrist, and his erratic accompanist, with the beams in the ceiling that spoil the acoustics, or the perfidious usher who opens the door and lets in an icy draft upon his sensitive-plant of an instrument. Now if it were not for the help of the creative listener the 'cellist could never transcend these conditions; and then where would the music be?

This in effect is what Professor Hirn means by his learned jargon. And I hope that our æsthetic scramble, now happily ended, will make it clear why a concert-hall full of creative listeners is such a wonderful place. Instead of a herd of inert humanity passively acquiescing in a single paltry act of attempted creation on the stage, you find a place fairly alive with acts of creation. You

hardly recognize that piece as the battered old Chopin nocturne you have known so long: for the good angel of every true listener present is taking it and actually remoulding it nearer to the heart's desire. Hush! Can you not feel the atmosphere of those gracious presences? Can you not well-nigh catch the eager rustle of myriad mysterious wings?

It is a still more wonderful adventure to be so palpably the sole creative listener in the audience that all four members of the string quartet look to you alone to uphold the public's end of the spiritual tennis game. And what a lark to be so *en rapport* with them as to share even their musical jokes and humorous by-play, undreamed-of by the rest; to have them take you into their tonal confidence as to what they really think of the music they are playing; and with them gravely explode with hidden hilarity when the pompous virtuoso comes in and, by way of doing the piano part of his own quintet, makes the unhappy instrument commit hari-kari!

The splendid thing about being a creative listener is that you alone can provide the necessary correlative for every great effect in the art. A musical Ulysses, you are a part of all that you have heard.

"But," some one will object, "why lay such stress on the audience? Surely the player carries his own best listeners about with him in his two ears."

A plausible fallacy. Few, in fact, are in a worse position to hear music than the one who makes it. He is under the malign spell of proximity, like the character in *The Wedding Feast*, or like some scene-painter who is unable to get farther away than the wings for a view of his masterpiece. For the instrumentalist is too near his instrument to catch more than hints of the tone-color that enchants his audience.

And his handicap is more than acoustic. Considerations of technic or *ensemble*, a frayed string, a squeaking pedal, or some bored philistine fidgeting in the front row,

are usually there to bind him to earth with leaden chains. However passionately he may long to

> " fling the dust aside
> And naked on the air of heaven ride " —

he is allowed but few breaths of the upper ether.

How different is the practical atmosphere of the concert stage from that down below in the quiet audience, where music isolates pure spirits and convinces them of their high destiny, fulfilling in earnest the poet's light prayer : —

> " Ye gods annihilate both time and space."

The player, like a harassed hostess, "is careful and troubled about many things"; the creative listener has chosen the better part. And if music is to prove itself indeed the most spiritual of the arts, it must do so by aid of the audience.

One naturally supposes that the symphony orchestra needs less help from the public than does the quartet, say, or the soloist, — that

five score musicians working together can generate any amount of the necessary atmosphere.

Far from it! Notoriously dependent on financial support, the orchestra is yet more dependent on that spiritual fee which no box-office ever demanded and no creative listener ever left unpaid.

Acoustically the orchestral player is at more of a disadvantage than any other musician. It depends somewhat on where he sits whether the tone-poem entitled, let us say, "The Afternoon Sunbath of a Mountain Faun," resolves itself for him into one prolonged growl of double-bass thunder that seems to loosen his very vertebræ, or a series of lightning flashes from the piccolo, like so many vigorous jabs of a hypodermic needle.

Though I first played in *The Messiah* at an age when music was becoming dearer almost to me than food and raiment, I was forced to admit that my chief impression of the performance was of an adult trombone announcing directly into one ear, "He *is* the-e

King of Glo-ree!" while, into the other, a large brass trumpet annotated this proposition with exhaustive foot-notes.

In a situation like this the player is in the trough of a high sea, and hears only the breaking of the crest on either hand. Or rather, he is somewhat in the position of our wretched scene-painter, supposing he were driven out of the wings and forced to contemplate his canvas from the lumber-room in the rear of the stage.

Nowhere, then, is the creative listener more needed than at the symphony. For, in large measure, both player and conductor must feel the spiritual force of the music by indirection,— through its effect on their audience.

In playing the 'cello the most delightful adventures have befallen me in connection with creative listeners. Two of my closest friends originally began the friendship by gleaming out from amid a crooked and perverse audience and helping me so potently as to turn what threatened to be a nightmare

into something as pleasant as a dream of King Cole's enchanted castle. By the end of each of those performances we had advanced too far in intimacy ever to turn back.

And better players can tell you the same sort of thing *ad infinitum*. One of the Kneisel Quartet assures me that he never begins playing in public without looking about for the most creative listeners there. He says that he can always recognize them at sight by a little sixth sense of his own. And then he plays all the evening to no one else.

Nay, gentle amateur of listening, it is more than possible that Carreño or Elman, Gerardy or Wüllner, Zeisler or Spiering or Schumann-Heinck may at this very moment be cherishing the picture of your glowing features and mysteriously revealed personality in one of those inner photograph-albums which are reserved exclusively for their dearest, most creative stranger-friends.

And, though you might never dream it from their stolid shoulders, the greatest or-

chestral conductors count on you as implicitly as does any mere soloist. They have appreciative eyes for you in the backs of their heads. Hear the beloved father of the American orchestra on this point: "Very few people," said Theodore Thomas, "have any idea how intelligent and discriminating listeners react upon the performers. A stupid audience kills the orchestra dead in five minutes, as water kills fire, whereas an intelligent and responsive audience will stimulate the musicians at once to their best efforts."

My theory is that an exclusive, contemptuous, undemocratic spirit is a sorry defect in any musician. Of two otherwise equal conductors or players, the more democratic will be the better one every time. Anybody who calls his public "the rabble," and proudly insulates himself, will always labor under a serious disadvantage. One feels the chill in such a man's work. It is eccentric, abnormal, devoid of that human, emotional quality which is the soul of art.

After hearing a certain famous self-centred European conduct in New York not long ago, I was not surprised when he remarked to me afterwards with a contemptuous grimace, "The masses — they are stupid! What do they care or understand? When I play or conduct I try to forget all about the audience absolutely."

No wonder he found them stupid! This exclusive attitude is the surest means of putting listeners on the offensive, and of quenching every creative spark that they may have brought as their offering.

It is a significant fact that Thomas, with far more provocation, never called his audiences names, one reason why he left them so much less stupid than he found them. For he valued and intensively cultivated in his public every vestige of the creative instinct.

Strange as it may sound, I believe that one proof of the rapid development of the art of listening among us may be seen in the popularity of the mechanical piano. For the practice

of manipulating the stops of this musical makeshift is perhaps as satisfactory an outlet, and even training, for the listener's creative faculty as he could find in radiating inspiration to the less creative kinds of singer and player.

On the other hand, the existence of the art we are discussing is the surest guarantee that music will never be entirely mechanized. Even the most perfect possible reproductions of the efforts of the great interpreters will never supplant the actual hand or throat product, because the true listener will always insist on polling his own vote in the democracy of Tone. He will never consent to take his fingers from the reins of government. And thus, he will never allow the human performance to be replaced by the mechanical; because the wildest imagination cannot conceive of a machine that will reproduce the spirit of some past performance of Paderewski and still be sensitive to the telepathic influence of its present audience. It is not enough for the creative listener to hear how

distant places, persons, and times influenced the Polish wizard. He resents anything that shuts him out from making himself an organic part of that music, and from actually influencing the spiritual quality of every note as Paderewski makes it. He resents any machine that proposes to substitute for a thousand different playings of the *Moonlight Sonata* a single petrified, statue-like thing, so irrevocably finished that we may appreciate it until we break our hearts, yet never alter it by a grain.

No! One of the most precious parts of music is its capacity for infinite reincarnation, and the blessed opportunity this offers the listener for self-expression. This part will never be relinquished.

IV

THE DESTRUCTIVE LISTENER

THERE is nothing that our music needs more than creative listening, unless it be apostles of creative listening.

The best musical missionary I ever knew was Walthers. And as the story of his labors is so illuminating, perhaps I would better tell how he began that movement for the conversion of the musically lost, which has flourished so vigorously ever since.

In the old days of the Thomas Orchestra, every Friday afternoon would find Walthers in the parquet of the Auditorium. At first, he was of all men most miserable, for his creative listening was always being disturbed by the musical impiety about him. For a time he was fiercely intolerant of this sort of thing, which he called destructive listening. His glare was superb and his hiss was of such a

dismaying sibilance as to silence even the most abandoned whisperers, for a few measures. Now he and they would sit rigid in a sort of armed truce; now Walthers would again be cutting single-mouthed a wide swath of silence about him.

But common sense foretold that things could not continue thus. And he began to make a study of the situation. Experience had already furnished him abundant data wherewith to work. As an accomplished amateur violinist he had learned, painfully, what the destructive listener means to the player. He knew that he who is not for the fiddler is against him, — is so much dead weight upon his bow-arm. He knew that the fiddler must either drag the other up or be dragged down; and he used to say that the latter alternative was wont to distress him even more than he had been distressed in youth when compelled to stammer "Excelsior" to derisive mates and a frostily critical schoolma'am. That was pure fun compared with trying Orphean

miracles on human stocks and stones. He knew that one nodding head or fishy eye in the audience can sometimes reduce the player to depths wherefrom a whole row of eager, telepathic, creative listeners can scarcely rescue him.

The fact that destructive listening might even kindle murderous rage in the breast of the player was proved, Walthers held, by the very earliest recorded chapters of the history of music. "We players know perfectly well," he used to say, "why Hermes cut off Argus's head. The Latin poets want us to believe it was because Argus insisted on bothering Io. But we know better. The real reason was that the brute had the impudence to take a nap during Hermes's — no doubt very musical — flute solo. And," he would add, "if the ancient musicians were half as touchy as the profession is to-day, then Apollo skinned Marsyas simply because the fool was so unappreciative of his work on the lyre. Hermes and Apollo did perfectly

right, too. Down, I say, with all destructive listeners!"

Walthers grew convinced that the destructive listener has quite as pernicious an effect upon his fellow hearer as upon the music-maker; that he permeates the musical atmosphere somewhat as a drop of ink permeates a goblet of wine. But finding that militant methods only made matters worse about him in the Auditorium, he resolved to try the arts of peace, and deliberately scraped acquaintance with the most destructive listeners in the vicinity. Before long he made the important discovery that most of these were simply undeveloped listeners and, under the proper course of treatment, were capable of growing surprisingly creative. Thereupon, Walthers decided to convert as much of the Auditorium as he could.

He began with the sort of woman who attends concerts simply because it is the fashionable thing to do, and who exhibits her exquisite culture to the world by means of

a voluptuously metronomic hat-plume, which comes to grief, however, at every change in the time.

Walthers found that this lady's one genuine artistic interest was sculpture. He promptly loaned her a book which thrilled her with the disclosure that the music she had supposed to be an amorphous hodge-podge of notes was actually moulded into as fascinating forms as ever was clay or bronze.

A young violin student sat near by who never heard anything at a concert but fiddle technic. He used to finger out sympathetically on his right coat-sleeve every simple passage and writhe in envy during every difficult one. Beauties of tone or nuance or construction did not exist for him. Every emotional appeal flew over his head. Music held nothing for him but finger-twiddling.

Walthers began by showing him broad, human horizons. He introduced the lad to Schubert, the poverty-stricken teacher, pouring out his deathless melodies on the back of

a supper-card in a tavern. He made him know what a droll, sunshiny old chap Papa Haydn was; let him see something of the hopeless passion that went to the making of Tristan; and drew him word-pictures of poor, cold, deaf Beethoven, working in the room where his wretched brother would not even allow him a fire, — or on the stage, being turned around to *see* the people applauding his last great symphony.

The musical lotus-eaters next claimed Walthers's attention. These are the sort that never really *live* at a concert, but only exist there, as Arnold Bennett puts it, "in a state of beatific coma, like a baby gazing at a bright object." Or, if they are more active than this, they merely know, with Elia, what it is to "lie stretched upon a rack of roses . . . to pile sugar upon honey, and honey upon sugar, to an interminable . . . sweetness." Year in and year out they will take their symphony as regularly as their bath without coming the least bit nearer to knowing Johann

Strauss from his large namesake Richard, or a trombone from a shin-bone.

Walthers found some of these people actually afraid of learning anything about music for fear the knowledge would make dry-as-dusts of them. And then he would spout them passages from Souriau's *L' Imagination de l'Artiste*, or quote Krehbiel where he says, "Real appreciation . . . is conditioned upon intelligent hearing. The higher the intelligence, the keener will be the enjoyment, if the former be directed to the spiritual side as well as the material." But more often he would scold the lotus-eater. "Oh, you don't understand music, eh?" he would growl, "you just enjoy it? Now, would you have the face to say that so smugly about any other element of human culture that you'd paid half as much attention to? Do you realize that a few days' pleasant browsing in any library would make you decently intelligent about music?" Then he would adopt a milder tone and tell them about philanthropists like

Dickinson and Krehbiel, Mason, and Henderson,[1] who have compressed musical culture into tabloid form. For he knew that one taste of a tabloid is often enough to begin the reformation of the most abandoned.

Walthers's success with people of these types was extraordinary. He used to say that almost any destructive listener may be converted if you can get him to do four things: namely, to hear none but worth-while music; to take tabloids (which will furnish him the essentials of form, musical æsthetics, instrumentation, history, and biography); to interest himself in the human side of the players; and to cultivate his musical memory.

With some kinds of destructive listeners, however, Walthers never had the least success: with those who, in the Meredithean phrase, "fiddle harmonics on the strings of

[1] Edward Dickinson, *The Education of a Music Lover;* Henry E. Krehbiel, *How to Listen to Music;* Daniel Gregory Mason, *The Appreciation of Music;* William J. Henderson, *What is Good Music?*

sensualism," with musical prigs, and pedants; and with those rank sentimentalists who insist on translating the infinite art of the composer into the finite art of the poetaster, tagging every musical number with a programme and explaining it either as "a song of undying love," or as "the struggle of a mighty spirit." "Confirmed programmatists like these," he used to declare, "are even worse bores and nuisances than confirmed epigrammatists,—and that is saying a good deal." Then there were the intellectual debauchees who take music instead of whiskey to stimulate cerebration. Finally came people like the two matinée girls who sat behind Walthers. Month after month they continued to whisper and giggle and crunch explosive taffy, in the same soft passages, in the same zestful way. Hissing only lent flavor to their outrageous repast. They appeared to gloat over the ability to give the listener more of pain than a hundred musicians could give him of pleasure. They took a morbid delight in impal-

ing those curious worms of music-lovers on their vocal hat-pins to see them wriggle.

This sort of environment it was that finally drove Walthers into his memorable experiment.

V

THE EAR CLUB

THE laws of crowd psychology lose none of their force when applied to the art of listening. Just as they can turn into so many murderers men who, taken one by one, would not stroke an insect the wrong way, so they can take a couple of destructive listeners and put their heads together and make the combination more deadly than any four isolated philistines.

One day while he was hopelessly contemplating the phenomenon of the hat-pin girls it occurred to Walthers that crowd psychology, like the proverbial poor mule, would work both ways; that in listening, as in so many of the other best experiences of life, it is not good for man to be alone; that creative, as well as destructive, listeners must be effective inversely as the square of their distance

apart, so that if you add them together you do not add, but multiply, their separate efficiencies.

At once he subscribed for half a dozen seats in the balcony and began to build about himself a bulwark of his most brilliant converts.

This proved such a delight that for the following season he chartered half of Section K and transformed it into a veritable Arcady for music-lovers. The sole admission requirement was a passion for the true art of listening. This was the motto: —

> "No gold can buy you entrance there
> But beggared Love may go all bare."

By an instinct akin to that of the homing bee, Walthers proceeded to single out creative listeners from every part of the audience. It mattered not if they were perfect strangers, he went straight to them. And the fact that they almost invariably met him halfway and hailed the idea of "The Ear Club" with joy, is simply one more proof of how the appre-

ciation of music, besides breaking down the spiritual barriers between stage and audience, breaks them down as well between true appreciators.

For, whether its members are formally known to each other or not, there are few fraternities more intimate than fraternities of creative listeners. Therefore The Ear Club was almost as close as nineteenth-century conditions allowed to that state of things foretold by the prophets when, æons hence, brain technic will be so far advanced that the spoken word, the furtive thought and lying and conspiracy will be obsolete, because the secrets of all hearts will be revealed.

When the supply of Auditorium material ran short, Walthers cheerfully resorted to the highways and hedges that his fraternity might be full. And, as he never would risk hurting the feelings of proud poverty, many a watch-pawning enthusiast, starved for symphonies, found in his mail a season ticket for Section K, the address type-written; and perhaps

never afterward consciously beheld his benefactor nor realized who the lean, austere man in the third row was, who seemed so popular; nor that he himself had been a member of that epoch-making organization, The Ear Club.

Earnest neophytes were sometimes admitted on probation, but the line was drawn absolutely against any one who even faintly suggested kinship with the three most destructive classes of listeners: grammarians, gluttons, and ghosts. These were defined respectively as: "all head and no heart," "all heart and no head," and "no head and no heart."

This does not mean, of course, that all the members of The Ear Club were perfected in their creativeness. In those old days the perfect listener — that exquisite balance of emotion and intellect which so many of us think of only in terms of the first person — was as hard to run to earth as a Platonic idea. Certainly there were no persons precisely an-

swering to this description in Section K, for even the leading spirits there were far from being such accomplished listeners as the delighted members of the Thomas Orchestra so often find to-day glowing in the heart of their audience like an Australian opal burning deep within its dull, brown matrix.

It was wonderful to see how the Club's influence spread. In a few brief months Sections J and L began to be honeycombed with creativeness, and small hives even began to appear in the desert of the parquet. It was no time at all before Flogan, K's eager young usher, had counterbalanced his great heart for music by gathering from the members' lips and libraries an astounding mass of erudition. Word was passed around the building that the encyclopædic Flogan found it even more blessed to give than to receive. The public soon learned when in doubt to consult him, and during the intermission he would face a veritable fusillade of questions.

"Valkyries? Them's Am'zons sorter. Fly on hossback and screech somethin' turrible."

("Telephone's down two flights and to your right, sir.")

"Batch? Inventor o' this here modern music."

("First to your left, ma'm.")

"Bass clarionet? Thing like one o' them Dutchman's pipes. Party with the brick-colored beard, looks like he was suckin' instead o' blowin'."

("Sorry, ma'm, but the programmes is all gone.")

"Master Hugues? One moment please." And Flogan would rush down to consult Walthers on the fuguist of Saxe-Gotha.

The Ear Club had been organized some time before the blessed Friday when Walthers first brought me to Section K. To my last hour I shall never forget the thrill of that moment when the master's baton descended out of the tense, eloquent silence, invoking the power and the glory of the fifth

revelation according to Beethoven. And then, as I felt something within me resounding not only the recreation of that music by string and reed and brazen throat, but vibrating as well to kindred resonances from the hearts about me, I suddenly saw the art in a wholly new guise. I began to be dimly conscious of music as a social power, binding people by myriad strands to all those other humans in space or time who have tasted, or are to taste, the ecstasy of creative listening.

Not long before that experience I had skimmed with loud hilarity Tolstoi's book on art. But that afternoon in Section K I realized that his pernicious theory had been irradiated by more than one golden gleam of truth. And on going home I re-read and assimilated into my creed these wonderful words: —

"In this freeing of our personality from its separation and isolation, in this uniting of it with others, lies the chief characteristic

and the great attractive force of art. . . . Sometimes people who are together are, if not hostile to one another, at least estranged in mood and feeling, till . . . music unites them all as by an electric flash, and, in place of their former isolation or even enmity, they are all conscious of union and mutual love. Each is glad that another feels what he feels; glad of the communion established, not only between him and all present, but also with all now living who will yet share the same impression; and more than that, he feels the mysterious gladness of a communion which, reaching beyond the grave, unites us with all men of the past who have been moved by the same feelings, and with all men of the future who will yet be touched by them."

Then, in reaction from this mood, I began to fear that the music I had just heard, fraught as it was with the splendor of its human revelation, had set me on the heights of experience, and that any future concert must bring descent and disappointment.

The only thing doomed to disappointment proved to be the fear itself. Each new venture within the circle of Section K seemed to bring us a deepened sensibility to art and to humanity, — and not alone the humanity of our fellow listeners, but of our friends in the orchestra as well.

Friends they literally were, thanks to Walthers who had led a pioneer expedition behind the stage during one historic intermission, to explore the sources of the symphonic waters. It had not been long before The Ear Club and the Orchestra (which we nicknamed the Hand and Mouth, — or the Hand to Mouth Club) were heartily attached to one another, and the musicians came definitely to depend for their inspiration on the wireless streams of sympathy that kept flowing over the footlights from Walthers and his listeners.

And after The Ear Club had organized an amateur orchestra it was the pleasure of our new friends to help us in our modest concerts, and to bear offerings of precious instru-

ments such as oboes and bassoons and French horns, like so many rare flowers and fruits for the bare spots on our musical banquet board.

True to its position as the American source of collective, creative listening, Chicago has not been content with pioneer honors. It has developed the art so consistently as to be the first, so far as I am aware, to attain an openly acknowledged state of sympathy between player and hearer. Not long ago the University Club invited the Thomas Orchestra to a banquet in their honor. The musicians, in turn, gave the Club a private concert in Orchestra Hall. And these events passed off with so much mutual satisfaction as to mark a period in the evolution of the art of listening.

A rather early period, however, as we must admit. For the hearing ear is still the weakest of American organs. Although we have imported an unequalled body of performers, and have been hoodwinked into allowing a

few native ones to struggle to eminence under various foreign disguises; although we boast a couple of the world's foremost quartets and orchestras, and one of the leading operas; although the greatest conductor of his day sacrificed his life to the task of making creative listeners of us, — Germany is nevertheless still justified in growling "*Schweine!*" at the flippant, noisy and remorseless bulk of our audiences. For the German can listen every bit as well as he can play (an even surer test of musical culture), and it is for this reason that his land remains the Fatherland of Tone.

What our musical development most needs is a few more Waltherses, and a few million magic ear-trumpets.

The outlook is bright, however. For we are behind none in the swift assimilation of new ideas. And the idea of creative listening is being swiftly assimilated. To-day for every member of the original Ear Club there are a hundred apostles of listening spreading from

sea to sea the gospel that the public must make half of every masterpiece; — and organizing Ear Clubs, we trust, wherever Beethoven and Brahms and Wagner unloose their mighty spells.

It would not surprise me if, before long, a Section K came to be considered a more urgent necessity for every concert hall than ushers or steam heat, or even having the piano in approximate tune.

And therefrom it is but a single short and perfectly logical step to the rise of the professional listener.

There will be specialists. Some will devote themselves exclusively to neutralizing the destructive atmosphere exhaled by that pathetic victim of musical indigestion, the average, overworked newspaper critic.

In like manner, just as new and benign insects are constantly being found to gobble up the various pests that embitter the farmer's lot, — a special breed of creative listeners will eventually be evolved to make of no

avail the efforts of each agent of musical destruction.

One of these days every performer will seek out, and provide himself with, his listening affinity as surely as he provides himself to-day with resin or throat pastilles; and the more affluent virtuosi will take along a special train load of affinities to sit in the front row at Kalamazoo and Oshkosh.

Finally, stars will arise in the listening firmament who will be able, like Svengali, to transform mediocrity into genius, and genius into the super-musician. And theirs will be such fame and fortune as falls to-day to the sort of prima donna whose chief glory it is to break the holy hush that follows a Schumann symphony by frou-frouing out in front of the orchestra and ogling the audience with her voice.

Deep in their hearts for ever so long musicians have hoped for such consummations as these. The only reason they have not given their hopes utterance is that the dear

fellows are such helpless, inarticulate creatures when it comes to expressing any ideas short of infinite ones.

I know any number of them who feel as I do, namely, that it were better to attempt a Bach fugue on a penny whistle or *The Messiah* on a jew's-harp than play to any audience which cannot boast at least one trained, creative listener.

VI

MUSICAL INDIGESTION

On the way home from an evening of music why do we usually fall to humming or whistling some melody from last week's concert? The thing is so unnatural! It seems as though the normal mind ought to be reverberating the strains to which the body is still sympathetically vibrating. Why, then, instead of mulling over the two symphonies, the three solos and the overture to which our eardrums have just ceased rolling an accompaniment, — do we insist on trying so far back into the musical past?

After long puzzling over this problem I have come to believe that we are led to do so by much the same causes that occasionally lead us after a hearty dinner to recall how greedy we were at luncheon. Reversion to last Saturday's treat after the Tuesday con-

cert means that one's apparatus for the assimilation of music is several days behind in its work.

The reason for this state of affairs is that concert programmes are too long. During the musical season their size keeps concert-goers in perpetual arrears. Therefore most of the listeners, performers, and critics who form the bulk of the musical world suffer from a chronic complaint. Christian Scientists would say that these people are "in error." Logicians would call this, I suppose, "the error of the undistributed middle." The rest of us would call it simply "musical indigestion."

Most programmes to-day are vast museums of Tone: and those who stay until the last note are often as unpleasantly affected as was the old missionary with the beauty-loving soul who spent five hours inspecting every single statue and painting in the Vatican and then tottered away exclaiming that art was a mighty ungodly thing after all.

The scourge of musical indigestion is the

worst enemy of the art of creative listening. One often notices how splendidly creative an audience is for the first hour and how rapidly thereafter it grows destructive. The more "resonant" the listeners are, the faster they use up their available supply of creative energy, — the sooner they reach that condition to which Charles Lamb's amateur organist friend Nov— used to reduce that destructive listener after the first few pieces of his interminable programme: "But when this master of the spell," complained Lamb, "not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive, — impatient to overcome her 'earthly' with his 'heavenly,' — still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions *Haydn* and *Mozart*, with their attendant Tritons, *Bach*, *Beethoven*, and a countless tribe, whom to

attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps, — I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wits' end."

This sort of thing was bad for Lamb, and for his amateur friend, too, although in general the player can with impunity partake more heartily because, to some extent, his music is predigested by familiarity; and because the fun and excitement of playing, together with his quickened intellectual activity, help along the assimilative processes.

For all that, long programmes often get musicians into a pitiable condition. And I can perfectly understand the action of my professional friend who was walking home once after having played in an orchestra for half the night. Yielding to an overpowering wave of disgust, he stuffed his trombone into the first drain he saw with such vicious exultation that he had no small difficulty, the following morning, in recovering it.

The most wretched victim of indigestion

is undoubtedly the music critic of the average metropolitan newspaper. He is treated on the Strassburg principle that the more you can cram into a goose, the more valuable you make the goose. "Critics," declared the uncompromising Tolstoi, "have always been people less susceptible than other men to the contagion of art. For the most part they are able writers, educated and clever, but with their capacity of being infected by art quite perverted or atrophied. And therefore their writings have always largely contributed, and still contribute, to the perversion of the taste of that public which reads them and trusts them." Now I think it unfair of the rugged Russian to blame any one under present conditions for being a bad music critic. He should have emptied the vials of his scorn exclusively upon our system; for it is a thing that can hardly fail to turn good critics into bad. It is a system which, if adopted by the wholesale liquor houses, would compel their tasters to consume at least a gallon of

each variety before pronouncing judgment upon it.

One day at dinner little Anita had a third helping of beef before realizing with a groan of despair that there was ice-cream for dessert. Suddenly the despair vanished. "The capathity of the human thtomick," she was overheard to observe to herself, "ith three pinth;—but it'll thtretch!"

So will the musical stomach,—but only with the gravest consequences. During the season a music critic in New York City averages ten performances a week. Now a corresponding regimen for geese or tasters soon results in *pâté de fois gras*, or delirium tremens. The journalistic process produces at the best various forms of musical indigestion, with one symptom common to all:—an utter loathing for music in any form.

All glory and honor and laud be to the small group of noble characters who by some miracle manage to remain good critics despite the disease which is undoubtedly tear-

ing away at their vitals. These hero-critics represent the sheer triumph of spirit over flesh. They form a distinguished band of Scævola-like stoics who continue calmly delivering their illuminating discourses on the nature of the divine fire while roasting their poor hands to a crisp in a mundane one.

But these persons are all too rare. The average critic sinks completely under his affliction. Happy is he whose paper affects a savagely pessimistic pose. He can obey the promptings of his agonized inner man by laying about him and sparing not. He is permitted to take out his sufferings alike upon the just and the unjust, and sincerely to portray all music in the repellent terms which a Strassburg goose might utilize in composing an anserine menu.

Equally blessed is the satellite of one of those fashionable sheets whose philosophy of music criticism is pre-occupied by the problem, "wherewithal have we been clothed?" From his column you somehow manage to re-

ceive the impression that the Rhenish Symphony began with a sun-burst of incomparable brilliants, disclosed an exceedingly low-cut scherzo, a slow movement in creamy satin with pink pipings overlaid by gold net, followed by a broadly scored finale two, to two and one half, yards in length. Most of the critics, however, have a far worse time of it. Their plight is aggravated by the necessity of working for those roseate journals whose advertising policy dictates that at present everything is disposed for the best in the best of possible worlds. So these wretched men are obliged to simulate perfect health and an insatiable appetite for music, and to soft-soap all musicians alike, because the first groan would lose them their weekly honoraria. But they know how to spare themselves.

One type slits his mouth into the perpetual grin of The Man Who Laughs. During a concert he tries to deafen his poor ears by concentrating his attention on some minor point of the performance and then writing

about that point the quaintest, gayest, most lilting little essay imaginable. And next morning the public holds its sides and exclaims how true it all is and how deliciously The Man does hit it off, never realizing that it has yet to read a criticism of that concert. One scarcely knows whether this method is more unfair to the public or to the hapless tenor or fiddler or conductor who happens to be the first handy ear-tab for The Man Who Laughs.

Another favorite defense against musical indigestion is for the critic simply to relax the muscles of his imagination and then set down on paper the shoes and ships and sealing-wax, — the anything and everything that happens to occur to him at the moment, as an interpretation of the "meaning" of the music.

Let it again be emphasized that the poor critic is more to be pitied than scorned. I ascertained this fact from a season's personal experience on a weekly, when I suffered the fewest and lightest of the daily critic's pangs.

The moral of all this is: let us cease our orgies of gorging and let us begin Fletcherizing. This will relieve the situation at once for hearers and performers. And the choiring critics will lift up their voices (though a little out of tune, I fear,) and call us blessed.

We have yet, however, to note the most serious effect of musical indigestion.

VII

THE AMATEUR AUTOMUSICIAN

A PLEA FOR THE MUSICAL MEMORY

"The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more."
WORDSWORTH, *The Solitary Reaper.*

THE worst thing that musical indigestion accomplishes is to atrophy, or at least weaken, the musical memory. It is as hard for the ordinary man to emerge from the ordinary long concert or from a debauch of music-reading with a clear idea of any one thing that he has heard or played, as it was for our old missionary to emerge from his extended rush through the Vatican with a pellucid idea of the Laocoön. And, often repeated, this relaxing, confusing experience is apt to get one's memory, or latent memory, into the worst of habits.

Musical indigestion is therefore the chief

enemy of the sport of amateur automusicianship, the practice of which is conditioned by a sound musical memory. Before going any farther it may be as well to state that the automusician has no necessary connection with such automatic devices as the mechanical piano. His only mechanical piano is likely to be inside his own head. But this is a superb and indispensable instrument. In fact, one is almost tempted to paraphrase Dr. van Dyke's *bon mot* about the two kinds of biographers, and to say that there are two kinds of musicians: automusicians, and aut-not-to-musicians. But this would, after all, be a rather too extreme way of declaring that it is harder to be a good musician without a capacious memory than for a rich man to see how the other half lives through the eye of a hypodermic needle.

Little will here be said about the value of a musical memory to the performer, because this every one concedes. But not every one knows that much of the player's most valu-

able practice is often done apart from music-book and even instrument. Happy the one whose memory so outruns his fingers that he may walk troutward-bound through Maine woods while slashing away at those Gordian knots into which Reger has tied every page of his sonatas. How three and four times blessed is he to whom it is granted to work out the cadenza of the Dvořak 'cello concerto on the seam of his trousers while the elevator is stuck between floors! "We musicians know" that slavery to the printed note is often the final and most fatal bar to spontaneity in performance. Even without all this anxious groping of the eye among the ugly lines and spaces, the player's attention is distracted quite enough, God wot, by the base, physical properties of his instrument, by the acoustics, or a cut finger, or "the unfit, contrarious moods of men" in the audience, or by a dozen things else. Woe unto him that is obliged to distract his attention still further from the real matter in hand by squinting at

the rude, inky symbols of the composer's meaning through that last straw, — vision. It were better for his spontaneity that a millstone were hanged about his neck and fitted up with harp-strings, and he were allowed to improvise upon them, fancy-free. Musicians feel the visual handicap so keenly that many orchestral conductors go the extreme length of committing their scores to memory, which means remembering anywhere from twenty-five to two hundred and fifty notes a second for an entire evening, to say nothing of remembering which instrument plays which note, and how loud or soft, with what sort of bowing or tonguing or drumsticking, how the phrases are to be sculptured, how fast the composer intended each part, and like details. One stands agape at the magnitude of such a task. But a moment's reflection will show that the very magnitude of that other, spiritual, task involved in the interpretation of an orchestral score, — supplies one set of human faculties quite enough to do without

compelling the interpreter to be always racing with his eyes as well, and fumbling pages with his fingers. Von Bülow, one of the most eminent conductors of his time, was so impressed by the drawbacks of the printed page that he actually tried to make each man in the Meiningen orchestra learn his own parts. If he had succeeded I think that he would have advanced orchestral art a whole epoch or so. But he failed. The men simply could not do it because, I suspect, they were all suffering from indigestion brought on by over-much reading at sight, and interminable programmes.

We are not talking here, however, about remembering music professionally, but for love. Everybody who does the latter — professional or not — is worthy to be called an amateur automusician. But nobody should be thus honored unless he loves music well enough to master it and make it his own for the pure joy of being able to use it at his will, morning, noon, or night, in bed, at luncheon, or up in an airship.

As for the listener, his memory is harmed far more by too much music than the old missionary's would have been harmed by too much sculpture twice a week; because the full enjoyment of this art, more than of any other, needs the aid of memory. Except to the fortunate few who can appreciate a book of printed notes as others would a printed novel, — music is an evanescent thing. It does not stay on forever like the Laocoön or the Last Judgment or St. Peter's. It does not even go on forever like Tennyson's brook (except perhaps for those who happen to live next door to a conservatory). It appears to us a transient gleam, and then —

> "Like snow upon the desert's dusty face,
> Lighting a little hour or two — "

is gone. "And the place thereof shall know it no more," — unless, indeed, one has had the presence of mind to treasure up a handful or so of the precious, white powder in the private cold-storage plant we call memory.

Thus, to speak of "a melting melody" is, alas! to employ a *double entendre.*

This evanescent quality makes it providential that more of music can be remembered with a given exertion of memory than of any other art, because it uses its material so economically. It can take one small form of notes and repeat it over and over again with various slight modifications, and finally build a whole piece out of it. How easy it would be to grow familiar with a streetscape by Whistler if it were composed in this thrifty musical fashion of nothing but the same strip of asphalt, seen from various aspects and in a variety of lightings. "Repetition is the fundamental principle in all musical construction," writes Mr. Krehbiel, who is, by the way, one of the hero-critics already referred to. . . . "While the exercise of memory is a most necessary activity in listening to music, it lies in music to make that exercise easy. There is repetition of motives, phrases, and periods in melody; repetition of melodies

in parts; and repetition of parts in the wholes of the larger forms." Beethoven began his *Fifth Symphony* with a motive of four notes which he described as fate knocking at the door. Mr. Krehbiel has shown how these four notes, in a general way, might be said to run, not only through the whole symphony, but also through other compositions of the same period. Thus it is evident that when one has mastered this tiny formula he has made more or less his own an entire cross-section of the master's career.

This, then, is a characteristic tendency of music, to sum itself up in one small motive much as a nation sums itself up on some national holiday by flying its flag from every other window. By rare good fortune this tendency harmonizes beautifully with the ways of the human mind. The psychologists say that it is natural for us to simplify everything for ourselves, — to remember a certain dog, for instance, by a white spot on his left ear, or a certain symphony by taking a men-

tal snap-shot of its few chief themes. In *The Origins of Art*, Yrjö Hirn declares that "the art of arranging great complexes of intellectual and emotional elements around single focal points" is not only natural to man but may be "greatly developed by exercise."

Music lends itself most readily to this act of arrangement. It requires a very learned scholar to reconstruct even approximately from a foot a marble Hercules that he has seen a score of times. But to reconstruct the *Fifth Symphony* in a rough and ready way from the Fate motive and a handful of other fragments, is well within the capacity of not a few amateurs.

It is interesting to know that the act of creative listening is a powerful aid to the memory. The more we give out at a concert, the more we receive from it. And at the musical board there is never any extra charge for food taken away from the table. The more we resound the players' and composer's emotion back to them, the more are we aided

in our unconscious efforts to pack the good things into portable shape for home consumption. For emotion not only makes the mental snapshot sharper, but also stimulates the summarizing instinct. The more emotionally a large work of art affects us, the more we are instinctively moved to sum it all up in a single impression which shall re-create the whole for us, just as we carry away the worth of the Mona Lisa in the memory of the haunting eyes alone; and just as the whole mystery of life is brought home to the poet by the flower in the crannied wall. "The soul, of its own unity," wrote Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*, "always gives unity to whatever it looks on with love."

To be without a musical memory; to be forever obliged to depend on some player or even some machine whenever you crave music, is like being so deaf that your only communication with the sons of men must be through the mediation of the valet whom you have hired simply on account of his

Bull-of-Bashan voice. Or, if not as desperately situated as this, at least the musically oblivious stands to the man with automusic in his soul as he who must depend on corporation steam for locomotion stands to him who fares to the gay chug-chug of his own motor.

The automusician finds things so convenient! He does not have to wait for the musical train to rumble formally in and bear him away on precise iron ribbons only approximately where he wants to go—or perhaps, indeed, in the opposite direction—and with all manner of annoyances like a conceited, overbearing conductor, noisy fellow-passengers, blockades, wrong signals, and so on. At any moment he may jump into his own crankless car, grasp the wheel and go exactly where he lists. He may drive through that bit of sunset-colored marshland a score of times together, or bide ten hours motionless on the bank of the Rhine if it so please him. What is more, there are no traps, no regula-

tions against speeding to offset this kind of travel. He can arrive anywhere in no time or in any other *tempo* he fancies. In his car he is practically omnipotent, — and omniscient, too, if contrapuntally inclined. His vehicle is even amphibious. The whole world stands open before him where to choose, if we except certain neo-romanticist quicksands which only the most diabolically perfected memory-machines may negotiate.

The cultivation of the sport of automusic is the only hope of emancipating the art from its present thraldom to performance, as the invention of printing emancipated the drama. In this reading age we pity the illiterate who can enjoy Shakespeare only by paying for a seat in a stuffy theatre. And yet, until we can learn to revel in Beethoven while walking to work in the morning, or at least to hold him bound on our knees and enjoy him before the evening blaze, we shall remain as illiterate in music as the theatre-slave is in poetry. Ignorance and inertia alone are

delaying that next great step in the development of music, — the complete coöperation of stage and audience which can only come about when the latter turns creative. For memory is one of the chief aids to the development of creativeness in listening, because it affords such unexampled facilities for the practice of the art. A man performing music mentally to himself is the only performer who is his own best hearer.

"Well, then," some reader may ask, "what must I do to be saved from musical indigestion and to cultivate a musical memory?"

You must do four things to music: read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it.

Read. Psychologically speaking there are two types of persons; the "visual," and the "auditory." The first perceive best with their eyes; the second, with their ears. If you are of the visual type and have not yet learned to read music fluently, your greatest musical pleasure may be still before you. How do you know that — once you have become mu-

sically literate — you may not enjoy reading a volume of Brahms as much as you now enjoy a volume of Scott? And as for your memory, quite unwittingly you may have possessed all this time the musical retentiveness of a very Von Bülow, except that this faculty has required of you, not ear- but eye-service. Perhaps it has only been waiting to reveal itself until you pay it the modest attention of learning to read; because your memory is so constructed that it does not recall how the notes sound as easily as it recalls how they look on the page. If, on the other hand, you are of the auditory type, you should learn to read, anyway; because nobody is *purely* visual or auditory. And besides, you need more than a bowing acquaintance with notation to be in a position properly to —

Mark. In the old Ear Club we developed a novel system of "marking" new melodies that took our fancy. This amounted to a rude but wonderfully simple system of musical short-

hand. It did not pretend to furnish a finished record, but only a prop to memory. There was none of the scientific looking paraphernalia about it that makes even a hymnbook formidable to a philistine; — no lines or spaces, no clefs, accidentals or tails to the notes. Each note was represented merely by a pencil dot. Its relative length was crudely shown by the horizontal distance between it and the next dot, its relative pitch, by its vertical distance from its neighbors. The measures might be indicated or not, at pleasure. Thus, if we wished to help ourselves remember the *Hymn to Joy* from the *Choral Symphony* we would mark on the margin of our programmes something like the following:

It is more important than this marking on paper, to mark upon the tablets of your mind such things as how this motive or that plays hide and seek among the bars with its playmates, the various instruments. For the mere

ability to tell which instrument of them is "it" is a wondrous aid to memory. To do this you must learn a little about musical form and instrumentation. And once you have made yourself intelligent enough to *mark*, you will be convinced that a musical memory is one of the most delightfully entertaining things that the First Composer ever invented.

Learn. Deliberately set your memory certain musical tasks to be completed within a given time. And, as a relaxation from work, play such memory games as "Whist-le" which is set forth in the last chapter of this book, or that anomalous sport specially made for picnic parties where you think of some melody and tap its rhythm on your neighbor's foot with your own, scoring one if he fails to guess it, and losing the "serve" if he succeeds.

Inwardly digest. There is no other thing of beauty on earth that men dally with more and think about less than music. And this, despite the fact that one small liqueur glassful

of Chopin prelude thoroughly digested, made bone of a man's bone and flesh of his flesh, holds for him infinitely more pleasure and profit than a whole Heidelberg tun of Tone to be drained at a sitting; or — to change the figure — than a cloudburst of ninety and nine symphonies that slip his memory because he has put on his mental oil-skins.

There is something both laughable and repellent in the spectacle of concert-goers sitting year after year and swallowing their musical roast-and-boiled whole, as though it were quite predigested and required no further exertion from them; — as though, in fact, we had already arrived at the state of things predicted by some European savant when science will kindly replace these very fallible organs of ours called stomachs with neat, hygienic ones of German silver, so that, instead of solemnly gathering thrice a day about the family board, we shall, when hungry, simply turn a German silver stop-cock in our left wrists and insert a pellet of con-

centrated turkey-with-cranberry-sauce, and, in a single drop from a medicine dropper, administer to ourselves the essence of a whole quart of (de-alcoholized) Tokay. When this time comes the sweet influences of the Pleiades will doubtless be captured and used to flavor chewing gum, and phonograph records of the bands of Orion will be on sale at all music stores, and musicians will have learned to save the public time as well as energy by playing a symphony not horizontally but vertically, in one massive but predigested chord.

Under our primitive twentieth-century conditions, however, it is well known to the learned that cake is none the less in need of Fletcherizing because it happens to be angels' food, and that the man who supposes that he has digested music before devoting as much time to thinking about it as he has devoted to hearing it, is not only befooling himself and ruining his digestion, but absolutely affronting the creator of this beauty and the

player who has been re-creating it, and the creative listener in the row behind who has been re-re-creating it. The sooner people discover that the musical world was never exempted from the primal curse — or blessing — of toil, the better. In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou become musically well-bred.

In order to achieve this end the first thing to do is to restrict yourself to hearing no more music than you are sure of being able to digest. Until programme makers have learned to send their audiences away still ready for one more course, it might be a wise plan to begin by leaving the hall in the middle of every concert and taking yourself on a quiet, musical walk in order to reconstruct as best you may what you have just heard. And do not forget to take along your whistle. On these digestive strolls that convenient amateur instrument is at its very best. A habit like this will guard you from a glut of Tone and insure you quite as much time for meditation as for listening.

If, for any reason you are unable to leave the hall betimes it is much better to take forty winks than to make a musical glutton of yourself. In this respect old Peter the Great was far in advance of modern practice. He once took a nap at the Opera and, on awaking, was asked if the performance had wearied him. "Not in the least," he replied. "On the contrary, I liked it to excess. So I went to sleep from motives of prudence." Doubtless the monarch indulged later on in a good-night stroll and thoroughly thought over the act or two which he had heard.

The prudent napper will, however, be very careful not to exert a depressing influence on the performers. He will either retire to the rear of the box, or else decline so low in his orchestra chair as to become invisible from the stage.

Under a sparing regimen like that just outlined the musical memory will grow by leaps and will soon be found one of the most delightful assets ever vouchsafed to mortals.

Memory in hand you can go back and lord it as in the days of Haydn and Mozart, when the best music the world over was the perquisite of royalty and nobility alone. For you will find your memory as good as a whole emperor's retinue of orchestras and singers, while less cumbersome and far easier on the feelings of the performers.

You will come to know one of the joys that make leisurely browsing in a library such a delight to the book-lover with the well-stocked brain,—the joy of discovering relationships. You will know what a lark it is to trace the genealogy of some Debussy or Loeffler idea back to Brahms, and from Brahms to Mendelssohn, from him to Schubert, and then back to Mozart and Bach and Buxtehude and Palestrina and so on until it grows dim in the mists of dawn. This and a hundred other joys will come and convince you that music never, never renders up its deepest pleasures, its profoundest help in time of need, its sublimest messages to men

until they have learned to remember and to digest it. Then you will be one of those fortunate ones

> "Who carry music in their heart
> Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
> Plying their daily task with busier feet,
> Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

I said just now that a musical memory was as good as a whole troupe of players and singers. In many ways it is far better, and especially on account of the perfection of the performance, — its sensuous wonder, with all the ugly shortcomings hidden and all the excellences glorified. It is at one of these retrospective concerts that we mortals receive in full measure the benefit of that divine law which always mars, however slightly, the perfection of any actually present pleasure that it may endue the distance with what Ruskin calls "that sweet bloom of all that is far away." For a performance on the stage of memory is able to include all the perfections and expunge all the imperfections of past

music. This is the most beautiful thing about a vigorous musical memory, that it lets us enjoy the far away at the closest possible range with all its sweet bloom fresh upon it.

> "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
> Are sweeter."

The critic who ridiculed the phrase "unheard melodies" as "a contradiction in terms" was having a sadly unimaginative moment. For who does not know that the poet meant those ditties which have "no tone" for any ear save that inner one "which is the bliss of solitude"?

It was my good fortune to learn about the perils of musical indigestion and the pleasures of memory from Walthers and his fellows in The Ear Club. For very much as Keats in his delicious letter to Reynolds once advocated a "sparing touch of noble books" did these truly creative listeners preach musical temperance. And many of my rarest memories of the old Thomas Orchestra cluster, not about

the Auditorium, but about the shores of Lake Michigan where I would take my single symphony or overture to "wander with it, and muse upon it, and reflect from it, and bring home to it, and prophesy upon it, and dream upon it": — to pipe it to the choir of the winds, to hum it to the gentle string-murmur of the ripples, or with some heavy theme strive to out-roar the drum-battery of the breakers.

One Friday afternoon gleams out above all. First on the programme came the lovely Symphonic Variations of Dvořak. Next appeared Nordica. But before the first note of her aria I was off for the old haunts on the shore, fairly "evaporating" Dvořak, as Stevenson would say. Undaunted by any wide demand, memory ran blithely, and soon the piece became but one variation of a larger set in which the rich undertone of the great city, the serried ranks of saffron clouds, the swooping gulls, and the emerald field of foam-flashing waters bore part. And for the *finale* the

sun, slanting through the towers of the metropolis, seemed by some divine chemistry to draw forth all the nobility and beauty hidden beneath and to waft them, a broad crimson harmony, out toward the shoreless horizon.

As we grow older and perhaps a little harder of hearing, we notice that the heard melodies begin to lose some of their old, piquant charm. But, as more than compensation, "those unheard" seem to grow sweeter and sweeter. Perhaps it was not such a harsh fate after all that closed Beethoven's ears to the strumming and scraping and tooting of his own day, while opening them more and more to those ineffable strains which he wove into his swan song.

Never again, I suppose, shall we scattered members of The Ear Club be so susceptible to the mitigated pleasures of the heard melodies as in those young years of the virginity of sense. And no orchestra may now thrill us quite so deeply as a stroll in the happy autumn woods of memory, where each yel-

lowing leaf flutters in an old programme-book. Gone are the discordant influences of the philistine, forgotten, all the flaws of rendition. Unalloyed and ideal those soundless symphonies float out upon the pure ether of the past, dross-purged in the kindly reaches of the years. As the inner eye wanders over that beloved section of the Auditorium there appear through the tense atmosphere of Tone visions of the dear familiar faces. The air of "Waldweben" begins its soft stirring in the depths of the enchanted forest, and the bird begins the same old song it sang to Siegfried when all the world was young.

VIII

THE MUSICAL TEMPERAMENT AND ITS DRAWBACKS

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus;
Let no such man be trusted!"

Even Shakespeare sometimes nodded. Undrugged by poppy and mandragora he surely would never have allowed such a trustworthy character as Lorenzo to slander the unmusical thus abominably. The poet, it is true, was even then holding a mirror up to nature; only mirrors have this peculiarity, that what seems right when you look into them is really left. Or perhaps he did not know the musical temperament as well as he would have us believe. For no man in his senses who was quite familiar with both the musical and the un-

musical worlds would have discriminated thus against the latter.

But "truth is great and shall prevail." And some day one of those all-wise Shakespeare editors who have such a *flair* for false statements may be counted upon to emend this notorious passage into something like the following: —

> The man that hath much music in himself,
> And is commoved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, —

and so on.

This book has thus far exhibited the philistine in a most unattractive light. He has been shown as a destructive person who strews sand in the musical gear-box, — an incubus who rides the fiddler's bow-arm much as, in Germany, those horrid night-fiends called *Marten* are supposed to squat on the chests of unfortunate sleepers. Nothing has been too insulting, too cruel to say of him.

Yes, but we have been withholding half of the truth. For philistinism is not half as

unenviable a state as it has been painted; and there is, on the other hand, a dismal obverse side to the musical temperament. The situation is enough to make the law of compensation sit up and lick its chops and purr with delight. One may not have his cake and eat it too. To enjoy musical advantages, as the phrase runs, is not only to be tortured by musical disadvantages but also to miss enjoying unmusical advantages.

A lady once played a sonata for Doctor Johnson. At the close he had nothing to say. "Are you fond of music?" she asked him, a little piqued. "No, madam," replied the Doctor, "but of all noises I think music the least disagreeable."

Lord North was once asked why he did not subscribe for a certain series of concerts as his brother the bishop had done. "Well," he answered, "if I were as deaf as my brother, I would."

"Clarence," begs the typical philistine's wife, "come into the parlor and hear Miss

Littlesharp sing." "My dear," he answers, "would you stir out of your chair to hear a lecture in Choctaw? You know perfectly well that I can't tell 'Yankee Doodle' from that 'Fifty-ninth Sonata' you talk so much about."

Now the musical do not scorn Clarence and these fellow philistines of his; they pity them. They regard them as tenderly as if the latter were blind and could never know the luscious, autumnal haze of a Giorgione background, or the radiance that Rembrandt makes to shine out of some squalid witch of old Amsterdam, or a row of the delicate, spirit-like trees of Tryon.

But, with this tenderness toward the unmusical brother is mingled a sort of gentle, wistful envy. For though his ears are insensible to the ocean-roll of Bach's organ, to the solar majesty of Beethoven's god-like voice and the cloud-pageant of Wagner's orchestra, — these same ears are also impervious to most of the slings and arrows with which an

outrageously noisy world keeps torturing the musical tympanum. For if music, as Pope avers, "can soften pain to ease," the musical temperament can even more readily harden ease to pain.

Not so with the temperament of the philistine. The tumult and the shouting of Sixth Avenue and its purple faced newsboys leaves him in perfect tranquillity. Unracked he can sit in September writing the serenest of Christmas stories full of peace-on-earth-good-will-toward-men while beneath the open window a hurdy-gurdy is murdering Mascagni in two simultaneous keys without waking in him a single yearning wish for the day when the grinders shall cease because they are few, or the astringent recitatives of the swiftly recurrent old-clothes men, either, with their ghoulish wail of "*Buy ge-a-ash-glo!*" If a gamin suddenly whistles through his teeth in the face of his musical friend, the fortunate Clarence can only smile in pitying condescension when the other winces as though some

surgeon's wicked little lancet were performing a mastoid operation on him.

People like Clarence have no concert-stage within their heads inscribed, "This curtain never drops." They are not obliged to entertain against their wills a cerebral imp of melody who never wearies of turning the crank of his perpetual motion machine. But the musical temperament, — Heaven help it! — is frequently fitted out with this inconvenient, and often maddening, equipment. Every act of the conscious life of many a musical amateur is performed to some sort of subjective music. Now this is all very well on a sunny morning as one slips under the creel-strap and swings into stride. Then the music-box in the amateur's head is like to play some brave melody from a Brahms sextet, making him glow like so much old wine, or set him off to a swinging, lilting strain of the Seventh Symphony, or float him along in a golden dream like unto the *Walhalla* motive. Even in doing this, of course, the mu-

sic-box is performing him a work of supererogation. The rub of the creel against his side, the promise of the five-ounce rod in his hand, the fallen leaves on the forest floor, blending, with their crimson fronts and bluish backs, to diffuse a purple, Monet-ish glory in the aisle of the wood-cathedral, — surely these were paradise enow. Makes no difference! *Herren* Wagner, Beethoven and Brahms present their distinguished compliments and insist on painting the amateur's lilies.

But how about the late afternoon when, under a drizzling sky, he slinks home wet and cold and ravenous without having had a single rise? Do his divine music-masters, like Elijah's ravens, minister unto him in this strait? Not at all! The music-box only makes existence more cold and dark and dreary by grinding out with harsh rapidity the most abandoned rag-time tunes to which his ears have ever in some hapless moment been exposed. Unfortunately this perpetual concert always varies in quality directly as

the height of his spirits, cheapening steadily as his sense of well-being declines. Half the time he would cheerfully exchange his tune-in-the-head for a cold-in-the-head.

For all this, though, he would scarcely trade shoes with Clarence. He had rather change places with one of those delightful people who are forever declaring with such a pleased air of saying something original, "I don't know music but I know what I like." This is a little as though one should admit: "I don't know my musical goal, but I'm on the way." Often with a tremendous show of catholicity, these persons claim to enjoy (somewhat) everything from kazoos to Kneisels; though any one with eyes can see that their real musical Eden lies where the Spread Eagle Brass Band is performing such "music uninformed by art" as *A Day in the Farmyard.*

These persons are happy cases of arrested musical development. In the first chapter we held that just as every adult of us has, in his

growth, reproduced each successive stage in the evolution of the race, so nearly every full-grown music-lover has passed through all the successive stages between supreme allegiance to the rattle-solo and to the *Choral Symphony*. Now the man whose chief delight is a vivid rendition of *A Day in the Farmyard* remains, musically speaking, in the enjoyment of perpetual youth. His pleasure in farmyard music is immense. Yet he comes in for most of the advantages of the strictly unmusical with far more than their share of fun. How enviable is his lot! He admittedly enjoys a great many varieties of music (though some, it is true, in the very greatest moderation) — and suffers from none. With apologies to Terence he can declare that nothing which makes a noise is foreign to his nature. While on the other hand, the man of cultivated musical sensibilities enjoys (intensely, of course) only a very small portion of the audible universe, and suffers intensely from a large part of the rest.

The demi-musical amateur who knows what he likes is even more fortunate than the man that hath no music in himself. He is no stickler for mere detail. A waltz by Chopin, or blind Tim, a simple waltz-tune is to him, and it is nothing more. Some persons believe everything they see in print. He likewise accepts as music everything with lines and spaces, as did the double-bass player who, returning home by moonlight "pretty well so-so," insisted upon undressing his instrument and playing the sparrows on the telegraph wires. Berlioz's young woman in the music-store is a classical example of the type. "But, mademoiselle," suggested the clerk, "this piece in five sharps, — will it not perhaps be rather too difficult?" "Pooh," she replied disdainfully, "that is all one to me. Whenever I find more than two sharps or flats I scratch them out with my penknife."

The demi-musical is an uncompromising optimist. He can with pleasure sit out a concert during which the poor music-knower has

had to writhe whenever the accompanist has "rushed the discords in" (presumably) "that harmony should be prized," or the singers have tried the wrong key to "The Holy City," or raised the roof with "*Still wie die Nacht*," or galloped furiously through "Forever with the Lord."

> "How sour sweet music is,
> When time is broke, and no proportion kept!"

the knower reflects, and registers a vow never to put himself in such a position again.

These things, on the other hand, have been so far from disturbing the demi-musical that he has most likely whispered straight through some of the pieces, and stamped or nodded an accompaniment to others, to show that he really appreciated them, and perhaps hummed *sotto voce* and munched peanuts and brittle candy, and burst into applause just when the piano was working up to the point of the musical story, and encored the very worst pieces again and again. And he

has even found time to speculate on why the silent little fellow over there looks so nervous and why his eyes seem to glare with something curiously akin to murderous passion.

Ah, if the man with the peanuts only realized a small part of what the wretch with the musical temperament is suffering he never again would cast up his eyes and utter the piteous wish that he "knew music." Why, the fortunate fellow can actually stand up in church and have Brown sing one tune, and Smith another into his two ears, while Miss Jones, immediately behind, closely imitates the tune the invertebrate organist is grappling with (only the young woman is a third of a tone sharp and a beat and a quarter behind) — and all this is positively uplifting to the good man. He can attend prayer-meeting and join in so-called gospel hymns which, in genuine religious feeling, fall as far below some of our grand old hymns as *A Day in the Farmyard* falls below Bach's Passion

Music, — and from these he can derive a pious glow. But the miserable lover of music comes away from such experiences as sick at heart as though he had been beguiled into abetting the most horrid orgies of blasphemy. Next Sunday he timidly tries another church. Then the man with the peanuts scorns him as thin-skinned, perhaps even impious as well, if he should venture to speak his mind.

If only the half and quarter and zero worlds of music could know what they miss! If only they could be cursed for a single hour with ears like the ears of Wagner. While he was in Venice composing Tristan, Wagner wrote to a friend, "Ich bin ganz ungemein empfindlich, so dass ich alles das schmerzlich in mir empfinde, was bei minderer Sensibilität gar nicht erst in das Bewusstsein tritt." ("I am quite uncommonly sensitive so that all kinds of things give me pain of which people of lesser sensibility are not even conscious.") If the general public could simply be made to feel for one brief

morning a few of the common agonies that ordinary musical ears have to endure without respite, but that never pass the threshold of philistine consciousness; — the needle-like whistle of the peanut vendor, for instance, the flat car-wheel and the loud, grating ring of the fare indicator, — by noon what a torrent of agitation would break forth, with what extraordinary powers would they not clothe our struggling little Society for the Prevention of Unnecessary Noise! Why, before long we might actually be imitating the Germans, — people so musically developed that they respect their ears almost as much as they do their noses.

That day will probably be slow in coming. For the great mass of Americans are scarcely more than demi-musical. And the few unfortunate pioneers who have ventured further than this along the path of musical evolution find their present environment little more congenial than the early Christians found theirs in Rome; or than Captain Cook, say,

found his when the Sandwich men began regarding him with a professional eye.

A word with the bated breath of pity for those who are afflicted with the disease known as "absolute pitch." Even among the quite moderately musical there are more than we imagine who know the tonal alphabet so well that they can always sing A B C at will, though the rest of us, unless we first thump the piano, are just as apt to sing E F G and never know our mistake. Ah, but *they* know our mistake only too well, the poor souls, and whenever any one sings or whistles anything out of its original key, they are kept busy, willy-nilly, transposing it mentally for their lives, as though the bottom had dropped out of their musical cab and they dared not call out to the driver. A few of the more fortunate absolute pitchers, however, have taught themselves to adopt a *laissez-faire* policy. One of the most miserable of the unemancipated pitchers loved the water. But diving affected his ears so that one of them heard

everything half a tone higher than the other. Thereupon all music was turned for him into the sort of Brown-Smith church duet already alluded to. He was rapidly growing frantic when he hit upon the happy expedient of plugging one ear with cotton during music. Defeat was even turned into victory, for he discovered that when tunes were whistled out of the right key he could often save himself the toil of mental transposition by a cunning manipulation of the cotton.

Thus far we have considered the advantages of the unmusical and less musical as contrasted with the drawbacks of the normally musical temperament. But these advantages gleam with triple refulgence when contrasted with the hapless condition of the super-musical. These wretched beings are direct descendants of Heimdall, the god of our heathen ancestors in the fatherland of Tone. His ears were so refined he "could hear the grass growing in the ground and the wool on the sheeps' backs." Now, by

imagining the god Heimdall's feelings if he were set down abruptly in the Bowery, one may gain some idea of what the super-musical suffer most of the time.

True, it may be all very flattering to a certain kind of vanity to have your own unprompted senses tell you as you sit under the spell of the Boston Symphony that the second flutist has just touched a corner of his thirteenth key in feeling for the fourteenth. Yes, but what is this fleeting satisfaction worth in view of the fact that our land possesses only a handful of organizations perfect enough to give the super-musical more pleasure than pain; and that concerts by the others are apt to torture his raw, quivering ear-drums as much as all the street cries of Manhattan, compacted into one horrid outburst, could affront the normal connoisseur of tone?

There is such a thing as being so musical that you are to all intents and purposes unmusical. I know of a gentleman so highly organized that he has enjoyed music but

twice in his life; once, a concert by the Fisk Jubilee Singers and once a service of the Greek Church in Russia. This is nothing short of musical puritanism. It implies such an uncompromising standard of perfection that life becomes one constant chaotic, irritating fit of tuning-up for the flawless, celestial harmony to come,—even though the heart-strings may snap as the inexorable pegs go on twisting them up and up to super-concert pitch.

But even the musical puritan, if he be a mere listener, has not tasted the dregs of Apollo's draught in their full bitterness. Let him wait till he learns to play.

"'T is we musicians know," a very fair amateur organist once declared. True; but what is it that we know? The half has never been told. It has, of course, been told more than once how wonderful we musicians find it to pile up our pinnacled glories of tone till the pride of our souls is in sight. But what meets us, I should like to know, when

we climb down from our exalted seat in front of the great organ, down, down to the C major of this life? Peaceful slumber? Alas, quite the contrary! We have heard a good deal about the joys of music in heaven. But there exists, as I understand, a kind of music in the other place too. . . .

To the pain he suffers from the music of others the embryo student who is afflicted with a musical temperament now adds the pain he suffers from his own music. This is no place for the brutal touches of realism necessary to depict the hardships of the ordinary learner. But perhaps a dim sidelight may be shed thereon by considering what even those favored ones had to endure who traveled the first human short-cut to the art of fiddling.

It is recorded in Grimm that an old Norwegian water-spirit called Fossegrim taught the fiddle to any one "who, on a Saturday evening, sacrificed, with averted head, a little white goat to him and cast it into a north-

ward streaming waterfall. Was the offering lean, he taught the niggard no more than to tune his fiddle. Was it fat, however, he would seize the player's right hand and draw it back and forth until the blood spirted from every finger-tip. Not till then was the pupil perfected in his art, and could play so that the trees danced and the very waterfall stood still." But pains like these, heroic as they are, are nothing to what every learner must endure to-day. For this royal road to fiddling has long since been closed and a double bar put up across the entrance.

Even when the learner has made a musician of himself by the usual arduous methods, his troubles have but fairly begun. Would he indulge in the royal sport of chamber music? The search for other amateurs neither "too good" for him nor "too bad" is like to be scarcely more rewarding than the puritan's ungenial quest of perfection. There is usually a little rift within the lute of ensemble. Either the second violin proudly recalls the

prophecy "the last shall be first," or the leader would autocratically turn everything into a violin solo with string accompaniment, or the 'cellist's right hand knoweth not what his left doeth. I recall a string quartet in my college dormitory whose little rift was that the viola player possessed only a violin case for his instrument and had to take down the bridge in order to shut the lid, as a river boat dips its funnel in city waters. This expedient resulted in a quality of tone better suited to the performance of oriental than of occidental music.

Let us pass with averted head the grizzly horrors of stage fright, subjective or objective, for even though you may not suffer from it yourself, it is almost as bad to have your brother fiddler grow yellowish green and begin turning over two pages at once, and to hear his most legato bowing transformed into a perfect up and down bow staccato which he could not for the life of him duplicate off the stage. And then to have him jump up

with a look of heavenly relief after the first number of a group of three and start for the exit and be obliged to call him back in a terrible stage whisper!

No more of the odious subject. And let us draw a veil over the performer's feelings when in the trolley on his way to the concert the fat lady to whom he really could n't give up his seat plumps down upon his 'cello at the curve and reduces it to kindling.

The special drawbacks of professional life will have to be reserved for the two following chapters. These will consider in detail how we Americans habitually knock the professional music master down when we are not engaged in "holding him up"; and how, by a tacit but general understanding, he is expected to stand and deliver at any moment without money and without price hundreds of dollars worth of his wares.

Ah, what brutal life discords, what harsh, abrupt transitions our brethren with unmusical temperaments escape! Although they

may never realize the fullness of life that the musical enjoy, let them take as unction to their souls the assurance that their mail will never include one of those dreadful bills for "arrears of pain, darkness and cold" that the musical temperament can never manage to get paid in full.

In their rare moments of unalloyed artistic rapture, in playing quartets, for instance, with three crony-hearts, the musical sometimes persuade themselves that one crowded hour of glorious Brahms is worth an eternity of American newsboys and hurdy-gurdys, of average singers, old clothes men, elevated trains, and granite pavements.

But what a fall is that, my countrymen, when at length they strike the minor and begin bumping downstairs by semitones, down, down to the cold, harsh "C major of this life" which seems to constitute the iron-barred, cobble-paved basement of the golden halls of Tone. Then it is that, from the bottom of their hearts, they envy the unmusical.

But later, when, in cold blood, they come to weigh the matter on the hedonistic scales, they are not so sure after all in which direction the pointer swings.

Well, perhaps we might learn the real truth if we were to wrest Heine ever so little:

> Angels call it bliss supernal;
> Devils call it pain infernal;
> Mortals call it —

the musical temperament.

IX

WHAT THE AMATEUR ESCAPES

In the last chapter were discussed some of the pains and sorrows peculiar to the musical temperament. In addition to these drawbacks there are others almost wholly peculiar to the lot of the professional musician. They are so grievous as to make that of the amateur seem well-nigh painless in comparison.

These additional drawbacks we are about to consider. But not, I hope, in any spirit of self-complacency. For the amateur who would be guilty of gloating over the special misfortunes of his professional brother ought at once to lose his amateur standing and have his bow-thumb severed by the public executioner.

The phrase "professional musician" brings before the mind of the average American the vision of a freakish looking foreigner with

flowing mane and doubtful morals, undesirable as a citizen, and barely to be tolerated for what he can do. This fancy is as widespread as that the "Italian" is the offscouring of Naples, who in turn scours off our streets, our apples, and our shoes. Consequently the executive musician holds a far less desirable place in the community than his fellows in interpretative art, the actor, the critic, or the elocutionist.

It is not so very long since all professional musicians were the Lord or King Somebody, his servants, — not so long but that the now emancipated fiddler can show to this day the black eye his old master gave him. For the musician is socially a victim of the youth of his art, — a victim of that human — or rather, inhuman — conservatism which is wont to refuse even the devil his due until a couple of centuries after the bill has been sent to the collection agency. The art of the fiddler is as yet too young and tentative to enjoy that consideration which is awarded to scions of

"the old families." This is proved by the fact that the representatives of the far elder art of singing have a much more desirable social standing to-day than those new people, the instrumentalists. "Vocal music," writes Mr. Krehbiel, "had reached its highest point before instrumental music made a beginning as an art. The former was the pampered child of the church" (and still is, by the way), "the latter was long an outlaw. As late as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries instrumentalists were vagabonds in law. . . . They had none of the rights of citizenship; the religious sacraments were denied them; their children were not permitted to inherit property or learn an honorable trade; and after death the property for which they had toiled escheated to the crown." (This last injury may help to explain the musician's proverbial improvidence.)

"He was a fiddler, and consequently a rogue," wrote Swift to Stella of some hapless professional exactly two hundred years ago.

In these words the great Dean accurately reflected the attitude of his day. Alas that the words should have continued so consistently to reflect the attitudes of succeeding days!

As late as Mendelssohn's generation that gentleman was treated like a lackey, even in the land where professional musicians have always met with unusual consideration. Mendelssohn was once bidden to play for the Grand Duchess of Weimar. He went to the palace with Frau Goethe, was asked his name at the door by a servant, and while his companion was ushered upstairs he was taken into a small makeshift cloak-room and told to wait there until his services should be required. After cooling his heels thus for almost an hour, one is glad to know that the "music" started up in wrath, seized its hat, and in spite of all that the agonized lackeys could do or say, bolted across the fields to the friendly shelter of Goethe's roof. The story goes that after this incident Hummel,

the court musician, was shown a little more respect in Weimar.

Not many years ago the custom still prevailed at private musicales of stretching a rope between the musicians and their "betters," like the humiliating rail on shipboard separating first cabin from second. It is said that Lablache is responsible for the passing of this odious custom. As he came up to sing in a certain great house the rope attracted his attention. He stooped quickly and threw it aside with a look of disgust. It never reappeared in that house and little by little thereafter the thing grew to be bad form. But the ghost of the rope remained. The poor professional still stumbles across it at every turn. It makes his life very bitter. "Ach," sighed an old violinist in my hearing, "it is hard to be condemned for life to Sing-Sing; but it's yet harder to be condemned for life to play-play!"

To be frank, the professional feels that society still looks upon him, with the haughty

Elizabethans, as little better than a servant. This drawback, added to those which the musical temperament naturally brings, often turns him against his very art and so robs him of his last solace.

Why should these things be? The reasons are manifold; and the musician himself is not wholly without blame.

In the first place, music is a convenient pretext for street begging. The mendicant class has twanged and scraped and blatted so diligently on our curbs that people have come, thoughtlessly enough, to associate the sight of instruments on the streets with an outstretched cap. It follows that the musician is made to feel almost a sense of disgrace in carrying a violin-box along Fifth Avenue, and the hotel porter looks as askance at a 'cello-bag as he would at a carpet-bag.

It was a sad day for me when I came to learn this grievous truth. In graduating from the inconspicuous flute to the dignity of carrying a 'cello, not a little of my joy and

pride was in the apparency of the new instrument. I conceived the music-loving public as a vast democracy that adored Bach and Beethoven and looked with mingled respect and gratitude upon those who could make these masters live again. I confidently believed that one could scarcely stir out of doors with such an evident emblem of musicianship as a 'cello without meeting sympathetic stranger eyes and fraternal smiles every block or so. To my youthful imagination the musical world was a thousand times larger than it actually is, and constituted such an immense free-masonry that any one who displayed a visible badge of the order like mine could hardly fail of a right royal welcome. Alas! I had to look long for that first pair of sympathetic eyes. Most of the eyes looked at my precious instrument as askance as if it had been a peddler's pack. In a series of *crescendo* pangs the shocking truth was borne in upon me that a 'cello-bag was considered by the world at large less a distinction than a de-

gradation. The climactic pang came one day when I was accosted in highly contemptuous language as a "dago musician" by a motorman and vigorously invited to get off his platform with "that there banjo." Thereupon my tailor's account suddenly grew while that at the music store correspondingly dwindled, and, for some time, whenever I had occasion to take the 'cello from under the shelter of a friendly roof I called a cab. Then it was that I began from the bottom of my heart to pity the poor professionals who could not always afford cabs and who had to expose their 'cellos to the hostile glare of the ignorantly snobbish world a hundred times to the amateur's once.

Not long ago an old master of mine, a well-beloved American 'cellist whom many Germans believe to be the foremost living chamber-musician, was turned away from the door of a leading New York hotel because he held under his arm what in Germany would have been for him as a patent of nobility, —

his Stradivarius. A folding harp, a telescopic double-bass, a collapsible tuba, — the inventor of these might claim a pedestal little lower than Saint Cecelia's.

In our land of wealth-worship the musician's poverty has dragged his name down almost as effectually as that of his rival on the curb. The prosperous middle class of musicians standing between the handful of opulent singers and virtuosi and the army of the financially embarrassed is pitifully small. Members of even the subsidized orchestras in cities like Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia have no easy time of it; but in such places as New York the player's problem is appalling. There, even by eking out his work in the symphony orchestra with various painful and humiliating expedients it is hardly possible for him to reach the standard of living which the dignity of his art demands. The situation is complicated further by the attitude of the Musical Union which insists that the musician shall be regarded as an artisan rather than as an artist.

Another reason why the professional fiddler's black eye has not yet been cured is that the technic of his art makes such exorbitant demands upon him. In early youth he becomes convinced that in these days of whirlwind virtuosity a life of solid *études* will barely suffice to make him master of his craft. So he takes the cash of technic and lets the credit of culture go, thereby perhaps missing the one thing needful to make him a master, —and even a gentleman.

The musician's proverbial egotism has not helped his popularity. This was born, together with his improvidence, in the old days of servitude, when he found that though his lips might falter at the mouthpiece he must blow his own horn, or go supperless to bed, for no one else would blow it for him. There is a story of a kettledrummer who applied for an orchestral position. "Sir," he declared, "I am the greatest drummer known to history." "How can you prove that?" asked the astonished conductor. "I

don't have to prove it," was the answer; "I admit it."

Among various instances of Chopin's conceit, George Sand has told us how he directed in his will that he should be buried in a white tie, small shoes, and short breeches. In view of which, that naïve egotist De Pachmann speaks truer than he perhaps realizes when he informs the audience that the spirit of Chopin has descended upon him. A curious instance of musical megalomania is shown in Richard Strauss's tone-poem, *A Hero's Life*, which contains a section called "The Hero's Works of Peace." This proves on examination to be nothing but Pieces of the Hero's Works, the hero being the composer, who admitted when asked that the whole work was faithful autobiography.

Society at large is slow to make allowances for this sort of thing; but perhaps its heart will expand as the musician's swollen head contracts, and it will come to realize that under the present primitive conditions a

certain amount of self-assurance is needed to goad the musical mare into any sort of action.

Again, the appearance of the musician often helps to hold his fellow men aloof. But for the phenomenon of musical hair society is largely responsible. There is a sound financial reason here for sharps rather than flats. Woe to the bald virtuoso who should endeavor to fight his way to fame without a wig. For, according to the popular conception, the wealth of a musical temperament may only be safeguarded by an abundance of locks. Thus the Circassians must be of all peoples the most musical.

Now the virtuoso does not indulge in long hair because he likes it, *qua* hair, but because it is a thousand times more expensive for him to have it cut than for other people, and he is a comparatively poor man. One of the world's greatest pianists when at home on his Polish estate is as well shorn as a Chicago business man; but his manager absolutely refuses to let him appear in public until the

silky crop has reached a certain long minimum.

Thus, too, in matters of dress the fiddler thinks he must adopt the Shavian motto: "Anything for a rise!" A bit of carpet is just as well for a necktie; the coat should be in the style of the eighteenth century; and the average matinée audience would doubtless be delighted if the virtuoso were to fiddle barefooted or in riding-boots. In one of his letters Stevenson has made an apt observation on this popular appetite for eccentricity: "So long as an artist is on his head, is painting with a flute, or writes with an etcher's needle, or conducts the orchestra with a meat-axe, all is well and plaudits shower along with the roses. But any plain man who tries to follow the obtrusive canons of his art is but a commonplace figure. To h— with him is the motto, or at least not that; for he will have his reward, but he will never be thought a person of parts."

Long hair, however, has an emotional as

well as a financial aspect. There is not a little modern significance in the legend of the Thracian ladies who paid the musician Orpheus such energetic court as to destroy him; and much of the fiddler's moral notoriety is due to the effect of certain music which tends to invert sex characteristics and to make woman the aggressor. The path of many a musician is strewn with a kind of temptation of which most men know nothing, and he who comes from the fire with clean garments after the sound of the flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music has had its effect, is made of stern stuff indeed.

Often the musician's charm is short-circuited for his adorers from his occupation to its badge, as with the soldier and his brass buttons, so that his power, like Samson's, is as the square of his distance from the barber.

The extraordinary number of divorces in the world of music is due in part to the customs of Thrace, which have made possible

such a newspaper paragraph as the following:

"Last evening, for the first time in America, at the second of these concerts, Mme. X. performed the third concerto of her fourth husband."

All these factors, then: — the remnants of a menial past, the musical beggars, the poverty of the profession, the ideals of the Musical Union, an overspecialization in technic resulting in lack of culture, egotism and eccentricity, and the peculiarly emotional nature of the art —these have kept down the American musician's social status and retarded the evolution of our music in two chief ways. In the first place, Americans have been led to believe that no one can be a genuine virtuoso except a freak with a harsh foreign name, and been led to adopt the German's absurd attitude toward the American musical temperament. In the second place, the American musician has found that well-nigh his only hope of success lies in masquerading as a

foreigner. Smith must become Smithski and live in mortal fear, knowing that when once his incognito is pricked and the shameful secret of his nativity exposed, the bubble of his fame will vanish, and he will then have to support life at two dollars a lesson, with hotel engagements in the summer.

Barnum was right. "The American public delights to be fooled"; and nowhere has it proved simpler than in accepting for itself European standards in music, with no correction for possible differences of national temperament. Even if certain foreigners had no financial reasons for swearing that our players are cold and hard and have "*kein Herz*," we might well ask ourselves whether we are not inclined to be emotionally saner in our playing than Europeans, whether we do not therefore strike almost as often as they an ideal balance of head and heart, and whether our native dash and youthfulness, our nerve, initiative, optimism, humor, and sporting spirit are after all to count for nothing. Mu-

sic is the universal language. Why should we insist on a foreign accent? But we do insist on it; and with passion.

The situation of an American in one of our excellent "American" orchestras is pitiable enough, unless he happens to be an amateur and goes into it temporarily in a dilettante spirit of adventure. Musically he is despised by every one on the *a priori* ground of his nationality. Socially he is ostracized, both by society, which considers him a professional musician, and by the orchestra, which considers him no musician at all. He is in the position of Rubinstein, who complained that the Russians called him a Pole, the Poles a Jew, and the Jews a Gentile.

We have done our native music incalculable harm by accepting the dictum of patriotic foreigners on our own art. But a German philosopher has pointed out our mistake to us.

The anonymous author of *Rembrandt als Erzieher* shows us the reason why the mod-

ern German treats his native professionals so considerately and honors with such eagerness anything that promises to benefit the national musical life. The German does so because he agrees with the author's thesis that true art must be national through and through and that the artist should be honored as a natural aristocrat.

"The aristocratic character of all Art . . . is deeply grounded, and may be vindicated from several different viewpoints. In the first place, Art is aristocratic because it serves the higher interests of humanity, which are earnestly taken to heart only by a small portion of mankind. It is aristocratic, as well, because it requires independence above all (it is more aristocratic to stand upon one's own feet than to make one's self the slave of foreign theories); and, finally, because every spiritual as well as every political nobleman springs from the native soil and is attached to it. . . . 'He is made of earth.' That the native-born stands higher, is more important,

and in every respect more remarkable and significant than the naturalized citizen, may be put down . . . as a spiritual and artistic as well as a political truth."

It is because the Germans have ideas like these that they treat their own musicians so well and criticise ours so harshly. If they should carry this spirit into commerce, we would reciprocate promptly and vigorously. As we have aped them in other musical matters, would it not be at least consistent to go one step further and give our own musicians as much of artistic and social consideration as the Germans give theirs? Ours need it far more.

Heaven forbid that we should embrace any such narrowing and egotistical philosophy as this of the author of *Rembrandt als Erzieher*. But even this extreme would be better than to keep on as slaves of the "foreign theory" that we are musically *nil*, and to continue estimating the performances of our débutantes, — whom having not seen we love and

hate, — by the standards of Berlin and Paris, not by our own. In music we have no standards of our own — no individualism whatever. We do not stand on our own feet, but howl when the Continental shoe pinches. We do not demand so much that a man shall be a musician as that he shall have been well received on the Continent. It is easy to see how destructive such servility is to our native music and to our best native musicians, — as witness the fate of Edward Macdowell. For the American virtuoso must learn to pander to the tastes of Europeans — and thereby divest himself of various national characteristics — before he can fill his scrap-book with the press-clippings necessary for a successful descent upon New York.

Theodore Thomas was one who saw clearly the evils of our attitude, and fought them almost from the time when he had to fiddle in a New York saloon to keep himself from starvation. He never tired of preaching the revolutionary doctrine that a musician may

be a normal-looking, normal-acting, perfectly respectable American and yet speak the universal language with a silver tongue; that Sherwood, Powell and Norton (whom men, alas! call Nordica) deserve honors fully as high as any Pugno or Petschnikoff or Melba. He himself set an example of unostentation even when a little "side" would have seemed justifiable in one of the leaders of his time; and he never tolerated freakishness among his men.

In this way, Thomas and a few other high-minded Americans have recently brought about a gratifying change in the social status of the native professional. The conviction which seems gradually spreading that a cultured man will eventually make a better musician than a barbarian, other things being anything like equal, is another hopeful sign of the times. Even in view of the progressive demands on technic, we seem to be passing out of the stage of over-specialization, and music is attracting an increasing number of college men.

As one more pleasant symptom of progress, the philanthropist is awaking to the fact that the symphony orchestra is one of the most potent vehicles of popular education, and that an American orchestra worthy of the name must, as yet, be liberally backed.

Thus it appears that both the public and the music-maker are gradually learning to lessen some of the drawbacks of the professional's calling and are combining to hasten the day when he may be permitted to take his place in our democracy, not as a bizarre mountebank, but as a gifted brother.

One of the chief drawbacks which the amateur so happily escapes must be reserved, however, for the following chapter.

X

THE MUSICIAN'S PARASITE

"Doctor," said the sick-looking man in the fur coat, "suppose a man had an irregular throbbing behind his left ear, a low fever, and a heavy feeling all over; what do you think he should take for it?"

"My friend," said the physician, "it seems to me that he should take advice."

Fisher, the famous oboeist, had several times been asked to the house of a noble lord in Dublin, ostensibly to dine, but really — as it developed — to make music for the guests. The musician decided to show a little character. When invited again he accepted with pleasure. "Don't forget to bring along the oboe," said the nobleman in an offhand way. "Many thanks, my lord," answered Fisher, "but my oboe never dines."

Kullak was once forced upon the piano-stool after dining with a wealthy shoe manufacturer in Berlin. Some time after this he entertained the leather king, and when they left the table the musician brought out a pair of aged boots and presented them to the other with ceremony. The manufacturer looked bewildered. "What in heaven's name shall I do with these?" he asked. "Not long ago," replied Kullak with a charming smile, "you asked me to ply my trade on your music-thirsty guests. Now, as it happens, my boots need a little free cobbling."

"I greatly regret," wrote Harold Bauer to a notorious musical sponge, "that I am obliged to decline your kind invitation to dinner, as I have cut my thumb."

Now if the profession will only take a line from such strong characters as these — cost what agonies it may — the musician's parasite will soon be exterminated and the art freed from one of its most serious drawbacks. I fear, however, that the musical temperament

is as a rule too shrinkingly sensitive ever to prevail against the hard-shell hostess.

By their tangible nature the productive arts preclude a great deal of sponging. Time after time the hostess will invite a professional music-maker with the deliberate purpose of putting him in a position where he will have to entertain her guests an entire evening. But she has not yet developed the assurance to beg for "just a tiny fresco on my library ceiling" from Mr. Alexander, or a modest bronze statuette from Mr. French, or the price of an Atlantic essay from Mr. Crothers.

The interpreter of music seems to be the one artist whose victimization is sanctioned by society. This, I suppose, is because his product is invisible, and it is hard for the children of a materialistic age properly to value "the things that are not seen."

It does seem a bit curious, though, that a practical, money-making age should arrive at the conclusion that the fiddler ought

to pay taxes for the privilege of living with his lovely art. For the public no more considers how he shall live with it than it speculates on the diet of the harping seraphim. It simply inverts the tramp's philosophy, believing that the musician owes it a tune.

The hostess who asks a violinist to dinner *qua* violinist, does him a manifold wrong. His feelings are hurt, for a player regards his art with an impersonal and jealous eye.

There lurks in every fiddler a green-eyed monster, the stern censor of all invitations. To prefer his fiddle to him is to strike at the inherent dignity of his manhood. To feed him in exchange for his services is to place him on the same footing with the stranger within the back gate. If he is a true artist, the food will choke him.

After hurting his feelings, the irresistible hostess "holds him up" for perhaps five, — perhaps five thousand — dollars' worth of his time and strength. "But," some one will object, "he enjoys his music so!" The ox

doubtless takes a certain animal pleasure in treading out the corn, but the artist seldom enjoys his work under such forced conditions. Besides, it must be remembered that the play of the amateur is the toil of the professional. What right have I to ask a man to take of his precious nerve and buoyancy and enthusiasm — the virtue of his heart and brain — and "give, hoping for nothing again"? His means of life and his hope of glory depend on the very thing for which I so lightly ask.

The musician's parasite may repair these wrongs by engaging the victim for her next musicale. But no; the guests are too familiar with his playing, and graft breeds contempt. So she engages some less obliging person, some canny Kullak or Fisher, whom it is impossible to victimize. She has hurt and robbed her friend the violinist, and now she deals the unkindest cut of all — she cheapens him; that is, she simply extends her two former attentions into the indefinite future.

The musician is often quite as much at the mercy of his guests as at that of his hosts. "Please play something." The request rises automatically to the lips of visitors. Indeed, they seem to think that they are behaving with scant courtesy if they leave without looting their host of his stock in-trade. But how they would stare if some fellow caller at their friend the architect's should insist on having the latter "design something" for their entertainment.

"Save me from my friends!" cried the aged Kant. "Save me from my friends!" is the cry of the professional musician the world over.

The more eminent the musician, the more eager is the frugal parasite to taste his wares. If he has the misfortune to be a man of such authority that his judgment is accepted as final throughout the nation, as is the judgment of some great consulting engineer in his own sphere, then the nation considers him bound to give all applicants the best

that he has without bemeaning the transaction by mercenary considerations. One of the leading American authorities on musical education has devoted what has amounted to months of an overdriven life to conferences with people who have come from every part of the country to seek his expert advice. And though he has by his counsels saved these inquirers many thousands of dollars he has confessed that not a twentieth part of them ever even inquired whether they were indebted to him. In these cases he always replied in surprise and delight that he had been only too glad to be of service.

Thus far we have assumed that the musician has not been called upon to lower the standards of his art. Though host and guest and stranger have imposed upon him, a musical environment, at least, has not been lacking. There has always been an adequate instrument, a sympathetic accompanist, the proper acoustic qualities, a silent and appreciative audience. One may play even "Hearts

and Flowers" under such conditions without grossly violating his artistic conscience. But a lower order of parasite is far more common. She invites a pianist to meet a few friends at dinner. Suddenly a time-honored instrument is opened — some old virginal, perhaps, with a damaged reputation — and the artist is very audibly urged to perform. "I'm afraid it is n't in perfect tune," declares the hostess, with a note of challenge in her voice, "but if you don't mind I'm sure no one else will." It is not often that the musician at bay has the hardihood to vie with such discourtesy and make answer as Chopin once did: "Ah, madame, I have just dined. Your hospitality I see demands payment"; or as that downright and dauntless soul did who pleaded: "But really, you know, I did n't eat very much." The other guests feel obliged to enter the conspiracy, and the pianist faces the alternative of antagonizing his friends or torturing his ears. In either case he is almost certain to injure his

reputation, — as a good fellow on the one hand, or as a good musician on the other. For forced playing under bad conditions is bound to lower a man's prestige, no matter how loudly those present protest that they are making due allowances for his handicaps. They are not. They have not imagination enough.

Besides, the handicaps are never all apparent. Perhaps our pianist has just been on a hard journey, or been ill, or engaged in a violent fit of composition, or has been getting himself out of practice by any other of the thousand and one approved methods. The chances are that the audience will form just as "snap" judgments on his playing as if he were deliberately appearing in a well announced concert for which he had been six months in training.

Perhaps the unfortunate is a 'cellist and is bullied into going home for his 'cello. The odds are three to one that he must play on a carpet thick enough to absorb one half of

his tone; four to one that he will have to alter the pitch of the strings enough to ruin their quality for the evening; five to one that the piano is false enough to make him sound out of tune; ten to one that the impromptu accompanist cannot soar beyond the A B C of 'cello literature, and will "follow" him literally, viz., about half a beat behind, so that he must hale her through the evening by the spiritual hair. The talkative guest will be there in force, and at the emotional climax (if there be one) enter the maid with ices as punctually as the moral in an observation by Dr. Johnson.

For the benefit of the cornered musician whose heredity and environment have made it impossible to follow Chopin's example and vie with his host in rudeness, Crowest in his book of musical anecdotes has recorded a practical cure for parasitism: "There was a shabby couple who desired to have the *éclat* of engaging the celebrated English prima donna, Mary Ann Paton, to sing at one of

their parties, and sent her an invitation. Being indisposed, she declined; but so urgently was she pressed that she consented to join the party. When the entertainments of the evening had fairly commenced, and several ladies among the visitors had sung, the hostess invited Miss Paton to seat herself at the piano, as the company would be delighted to hear her beautiful voice; but the singer, with a very serious countenance, begged to be excused. At first the astonishment created by this refusal was evinced by a dead silence and a fixed stare, but at length the disappointed hostess burst out, saying, 'What! not sing, Miss Paton? Why, it was for this that I invited you to my party, and I told all my guests that you were coming.' 'That quite alters the case,' said the other; 'I was not at all aware of this, or I should not have refused; but since you have invited me professionally, I shall of course sing immediately.' 'What a good creature!' rejoined the hostess; 'I thought you could not per-

sist in refusing me.' So Miss Paton sang the entire evening, giving every song she was asked for, and being encored several times. In the morning, to the utter astonishment of the parsimonious couple, a bill for two hundred dollars was presented to them, for professional services, which of course they had to pay."

In olden times it was the musician, the poor vagabond fiddler, who was the *parasitos*, the eater at another's table. To-day it is the musician who occupies the head of the board and dispenses spiritual meat and drink to his former patrons. I think that it must be some vague realization of the grim humor of this reversal that has turned the vagabond fiddler into such a recklessly magnificent entertainer of bejeweled parasites.

But the situation is not as ugly as it appears, and the musician is not the one to harbor malice. For he realizes that the parasite does not mean to be dishonorable, and is, in fact, merely thoughtless and naïve. In

a dim way he realizes that his wrongs have persisted mainly because he belongs to an inarticulate tribe, too easy-going to complain clearly and forcibly. And he has trusted all along that if a champion should arise, ungallant and voluble enough to voice his woes, they would

> "softly and suddenly vanish away
> And never be met with again."

XI

THE MUSICAL PHARMACY

"What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

DRYDEN.

"the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft controul."

GRAY.

IT is perfectly true that music is apt to give its devotees indigestion, and make them despised and rejected of men, and half bury them under a small avalanche of the other woes which we have been considering. And yet this art has the remarkable power of allaying the ills itself has caused. It is like modern warfare which tenderly gathers up the wounded from the battlefield, conveys them to hospitals modern in every respect, and there tries as hard to cure as it had tried to kill.

It is related that Claude Le Jeune, the fa-

vorite musician of King Henry III, once caused a spirited air to be sung at a wedding, "which so animated a gentleman who was present that he clapped his hand on his sword and swore that it was impossible for him to refrain from fighting with the first person he met; upon which Claude caused another air to be performed, of a soothing kind, which immediately restored him to his natural temperament."

It has long been known that music possesses simple powers like these; that it can not only "soothe the savage breast," but even make it savage in the first place; that it can dry up the iron tears on Pluto's cheek as well as draw them down its flinty surface. Readers of Dryden will recollect how easily old Timotheus with lyre and flute put Alexander the Great through his emotional paces; and every music lover can doubtless recall no end of times when music has consoled or soothed or stimulated him in the hour of need.

"Music will some day," writes Crowest, "become a powerful and accepted therapeutic. The ancients tried it and found it answer. Saul benefited by it; Clinias the Pythagorean resorted to his harp at periods of uncontrollable emotion; the mind of Madame de la Marche, wrung to pieces through her husband's inconstancy, was restored by the soothing balm of harp-strings; have many not read of George Eliot's Caterina taking refuge in harpsichord music from her own passion? We knew a great executant who was summoned, as a last resource, to play at the bedside of a man on the brink of eternity. Oh, yes! Music is a blessed, God-given restorative in mental trial."

Since music, then, has such powers, I wonder why we do not deliberately try to harness them to the service of man as we have begun to harness water-power and suggestion and radio-activity. The art can do almost anything it likes with the human mind; yet we seldom think of actually selecting and hear-

ing the kind of piece that squares with our inner need; and we persistently keep on in our reckless fashion exposing ourselves to the effects of all kinds of music without the least regard to the nature of the forces we are turning loose. Musically, at least, we are almost as primitive as those ancient ancestors of ours who went about indiscriminately sampling all the herbs of the field to see how each would affect them. Sometimes they happened to strike the very thing for the complaint. More often they slew themselves in the quest, — unless, indeed, they possessed an instinct for herbs superior to our present one for music. Or, to bring the figure nearer home, we attend lengthy concerts, often without knowing beforehand what we are going to hear, and stay to the bitter end, taking everything just as it comes. And often this has somewhat the same effect on our spirits as it would have on our bodies to rush into the nearest pharmacy and drain the first dozen bottles we came to on the shelves.

Why, in this land of religions, does not some new sect found its faith on the healing power of music? The reason perhaps is that music — unlike the pharmacopœia — is well understood to be all things to all men and very different things to different men. It is as true in the concert hall as at dinner that what is one man's meat may be another man's poison. Yet we all acknowledge this "other man" to be rather an exceptional creature; and it is our belief that, broadly speaking, a certain food may be counted on to have a uniform effect upon everybody at the table. This is why we continue serenely building up the broad principles of dietetics while expecting each individual to start therefrom and work out the details of his own table regimen according to his particular needs; — and why we neglect the science of medicinal music.

Now though a piece of music differs from a piece of roast beef in that it has the power to convey a different set of mental images to

each one of its consumers, yet, despite this diversity of suggestion, it can be counted on to have very much the same uniform effect on their emotional constitutions as the beef has on their physical.

A cradle-song, for example, if well played on the violin, might bring to the mind of one hearer the lapping of moonlit ripples in some quiet cove, to another the noon-hour of luxurious indolence at the cracker-factory, to a third the slow waving of fronds on some crystalline sea-floor, to yet another the moment when the aeroplane motor is cut off and the great bird starts on its long, smooth, silent glide to earth. Perhaps to only one in the whole audience will that melody conjure up the vignette of a baby being rocked to sleep on its mother's breast. But note that to every one alike, with all their varying concrete interpretations, this particular music can scarcely fail to bring a feeling of tranquillity. And note, as well, that the music does not convey the feeling by mere sugges-

tion as the other arts would be driven to do: it is, in some mysterious way, *the feeling itself.*

Of course everybody needs to work out for himself the details of his musical pharmacy much as he needs to work out those of his own scheme of dietetics. Yet this does not mean that music of marked character may not be counted on to affect people with sufficient emotional uniformity to make a science of musical pharmacy possible.

Now, although perfectly recognizing the fact that the varied contents of any one person's musical medicine-chest may not be efficacious in their entirety for any other person, yet I am going to name a few of the remedies in my own small pharmacy in the hope of suggesting to another amateur some specific that may square with his needs and encourage him to form a pharmacy of his own. It is but fair to say that no small pains have been taken in guarding against individual eccentricities and the chance of a merely

accidental association of certain music with certain emotions. No remedy is mentioned here unless its efficacy has been vouched for by a jury of friends, all better musicians than the writer. This list, therefore, has been brought nearer to universal validity than any purely first-personal pharmacopœia possibly could be.

An excellent sarsaparilla for that condition which the younger generation elegantly terms "dopiness," and their elders describe as "feeling like a stewed owl," is a rousing performance of *The Ride of the Valkyries* (the pianola will even do at a pinch), or of Schubert's *Erl-King*, or of that *Carnival Overture*, by Dvořak, which is almost like a plunge into an electric fountain of youth.

> "To one who has been long in city pent
> 'T is very sweet to look into the fair
> And open face of heaven" —

that spreads above him when he climbs with Debussy upon the shoulder of that pleasant, grassy knoll which he calls his "Mountain,"

or even to feel for a moment the pure, warm, bright meadows that surround the "Sunshine" song of Schumann: to follow the windings of the sparkling river in Smetana's tone-poem *The Moldau*, or to lie on your back under the thick leaves while Wagner's wand transforms such wood-magic as that of Westermain into pure tone in the *Waldweben*.

Music is the comfort of the comfortless, the mighty consoler of them that mourn. What reader of De Morgan can forget how potently those few measures from the first movement of Beethoven's *Waldstein Sonata* comforted Joseph Vance when he had lost his beloved foster-father? Less calm and powerful and god-like than this, but more intimate and tender is Chopin's E major *étude*. One of my friends was once in a dangerous state of mind. Everything was black around him. There was no ray of comfort, no gleam of hope, nothing left to live for. He was fast slipping into melancholia. His thoughts

turned often to the question: to be or not to be? One morning as he was dressing and pondering darkly on the relative attractions of life and death his small daughter began with halting fingers to play this *étude* in the room beneath. And all at once my friend was conscious of a wave of consolation flowing through him. It came with all the actuality of a physical wave. "Ah, what's the use?" he cried. "This is really too beautiful!" And from that moment on, life held him.

Music is especially rich in those large, ineffable, irresistible consolations compared to which the verbal attempts of well-meaning friends sink into mere babble. For all its clinging sadness, the *Adagio* from Beethoven's *Sonata Pathetic* is one of these. The slow movement of Brahms's second 'cello sonata has healing in its wings; and that of Dvořak's concerto for the same instrument can even

"minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;

Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff,
Which weighs upon the heart."

If Shakespeare had been a musical amateur of the twentieth century he would never have talked about these things in the hopeless way he did. He would have known that hard-headed alienists even recommend music as a hopeful treatment for insanity. We moderns sometimes forget how late in history musical art attained its teens.

It is not likely, however, that we of to-day have quite such a potent cure for timidity as the ancient Spartans had. It is written of Tyrtæus that, having caused his poetry "to be sung with flutes, well tuned together, he so stirred and inflamed the courage of the soldiers thereby, that whereas they had before been overcome in divers conflicts, being then transported with the fury of the Muses, they became conquerors, and cut in pieces the whole army of the Messenians." Still,

when we remember that the Greek flutes were rather like modern fifes, and recollect what feats of valor certain shrill renditions of *Yankee Doodle* have inspired in our own history; when we recall that even *Die Wacht am Rhein* and the *Marsellaise* have power to heat our blood, and the *Sword Motive* and *The Two Grenadiers*, to stir our souls to a noble rage, we perceive that the power of martial music is after all very much the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Respecting the best remedy for hardening of the heart, it is difficult to decide between the poignant, heart-rending *Adagio Lamentoso* that ends Tschaikowsky's *Pathetic Symphony*, and some of the tender little piano pieces that Schumann wrote for and about children, with all the loving humor, the delicate insight that Stevenson showed long afterwards in laying out his *Child's Garden of Verses*.

As for a mere case of selfishness, that is easily disposed of by one or two applications

of the *Funeral March* from Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony*.

When one happens to feel intellectually flabby or mawkishly sentimental or sicklied o'er with a pale cast of thoughtlessness, the best thing he can do, in my opinion, is to follow with all his might the closely wrought, brilliant, exhilarating reasoning of a Bach fugue or "invention," which will prove as good a brain bracer as an hour's hard labor over Aristotle or Spencer's *First Principles*.

If one is feeling conceited it is an excellent thing to take up the music of some half-forgotten second- or third-rater like Hummel or Dussek, like Philipp Emanuel Bach or Cherubini, and consider how much of skill, energy, and patience, of subtlety and learning and self-repression, and how many flashes of true inspiration have been made as nought by the achievements of the first-raters. After that it were well to choose some stupendous work like one of Beethoven's last quartets,

and steep one's self in it until all the petty vanity has been steeped away.

In the wide realm of the arts I know of two supreme specifics for one of those ultra-ultramarine Mondays when you feel like the latter end of a mis-spent life. These are: Stevenson's Letters, and that *finale* from Brahms's *First Symphony* which so closely favors its sire, Beethoven's *Hymn to Joy*.

Anger needs a big, broad, flowing antidote, sympathetically genial but not gay (for gayety would jar), with the least hint of the inhibitory powers of religion. It must have in it something at once calming and stirring. Such a strain, to my mind, is the *Pilgrim's Chorus* from *Tannhäuser*.

When we have been laying waste our powers by having the world "too much with us"; when our nerves are frazzled out by the strenuous, ugly confusion of modern, metropolitan existence; "when life becomes a spasm," — then we need such deep, serene beauty as the variations from the *Appassion-*

ata Sonata of Beethoven, or one of those mellow German chorales like *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunde*, that say with their first benign harmonies: "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Or, if one is outworn with intellectual toil, that blessed *Good Friday Spell* from *Parsifal* might be always there, if one only knew it, to perform the gentle ministry of its healing hands, —

> "Pressing the brain, which too much thought expands,
> Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
> Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
> And all lay quiet, happy, and suppress'd."

In the musical pharmacy there should always be a particular shelf of cures for commonplaceness and sordid materialism, and of antidotes against those times when the thing that should be "one grand, sweet song" turns into as repellently arid prose as ever smudged the dread pages of Harvey's Grammar. The quintessence of musical romance

should be kept there. On that shelf the horns of elfland that blow ever so faintly in Weber's *Oberon Overture* should forever be found in excellent playing condition; and a soft corner is to be reserved for Schumann's tiny *Fürchtenmachen*, which should be watched over by that *Fair Melusine* whom Mendelssohn made like unto some fairy princess out of Grimm.

I should like to see the really musical misanthrope who could keep on hating his fellows under repeated applications of Schubert's *Unfinished*, or of the Romance from Schumann's *D Minor Symphony*.

As for feeling "chilly and grown old" and all dried up within, it is not to be thought of a moment longer with the Minuet from Beethoven's first piano sonata sounding in one's ears and charming away the furrows with its winsome humors, its exquisite kitten-like playfulness.

Jealousy requires much the same sort of medicine as anger, only it must not be so

solemn, and more careless and swinging and magnanimous; with more of sunlight and laughter in it. I know nothing better than "the length and the breadth and the sweep" of the prelude to *Die Meistersinger*.

For boredom is indicated a bottle or two of such champagne as Liszt's *Les Preludes*, or the opening spree of either of the Schumann Carnivals.

For mere facial longitude the end of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony would not be amiss. And as for worry, it seems a contemptible thing when the Brahms *Wiegenlied* or the *Dream Music* from *Hänsel und Gretel* floats out upon the charméd air and draws the tired eyelids contentedly down over the tired eyes.

The best thing for the relaxing and soothing of mouth-muscles which have been made to ache through keeping up a chronic, insincere smile at a reception, is Cesar Franck's gigantic piano Prelude in E Major.

And as for all manner of pettiness and

faultfinding; as for the miserable odds and ends of human frailty and the half-broken-down partitions of prejudice that sometimes clutter up the soul and divide it into a series of miserable small ante-chambers to nothing at all, — the *Procession of the Gods to Walhalla* from *Das Rheingold* will sweep these all away in a tremendous trice and make one fairly spacious within.

As an antidote for pure misery, what could be better than a generous dose of unadulterated musical happiness? If there is any much purer than the great Schubert quintet for strings, I should like to be informed of it.

There are not a few universities that give men long rolls of parchment and the degree of D. Mus. when they really ought to dub them Musical Pharmacists. So far as I am aware the true Doctors of Music are yet to come. Those falsely so called are the men who are skilled in putting up existing formu-

las at so much per formula, and occasionally patenting one themselves.

The real doctor of music, when he appears, will be quite different. In the first place he will be such an accomplished automusician that he can always give himself silent treatment with the proper unheard melody the instant any complaint shows its head. Thus he will enjoy chronic good health and be his own best advertisement. Then he will be an exceedingly human sort of psychologist who can diagnose your mind or heart or soul diseased, or your slightest temperamental failings, and find out at once what is the trouble with the atmosphere in your home. For this trouble he will prescribe; and perhaps even open his instrument case and snatch out a fiddle and fill his prescription on the spot. Or he may walk into the house and take one look at your fluttering hands and sunken eyes; then make for the piano-stool, draw a deep breath and begin rolling out of his broad chest the calm verities of "*Du bist die Ruh.*"

On second thought let us call this servant in the house something besides Doctor of Music. The title has such disagreeable associations with dissecting rooms in conservatories, and laborious savants holding long-faced inquests over cadavers of counterpoint. It would be so much jollier to see in the window of every music store a small brass plate bearing some such legend as this:

JOHN BROWN

SOUL

TUNER

XII

THE WEARING QUALITIES OF MUSIC

If the string-quartet party you were enjoying on your private yacht had the ill fortune to be cast away on Crusoe's island, and you could stow only one piece of music in your bosom before the good craft broke up and you were washed ashore on the 'cello-box with your three comrades, — what would that one piece of music be?

I think I know. Not the cloying periods of Raff nor the short, monotonously gusty phrases of Grieg, nor any of the excitable Slavik music. It would not be the naïve geniality of Haydn nor the serene, obvious beauty of Mozart or Schubert or the young Beethoven. Not at all. Beneath your bathing garments you would stow one of those gray, inscrutable works of Brahms into which you have as yet penetrated only a very short

distance, and that with difficulty, because it is like a granite quarry veined with gold. Or you might conceivably snatch up one of those gnarled last quartets by Beethoven, — a thing that was at first sight about as beautiful to you as the scarred, ancient trunk of the tree of knowledge itself. Under these circumstances, though, you would not care much for mere externals. You would think only of wearing qualities.

What, then, are the qualities that make one piece of music wear for centuries and another wear out in days? Their name is legion. We could never discuss them all in these few pages. But let us look for some of the chief ones.

Before we begin, however, one point must be made clear. To say that a certain piece of music wears better than another piece is not equivalent to saying that it *is* better. That would be like declaring the immortelle a better flower than the anemone. The word "wears" is to be taken in a quantitative

rather than in a qualitative sense. It means that, in the long run, one piece of music gives more pleasure and profit than another, — that, in fact, it *has* a "long run."

Perhaps the most practical method of inquiry will be to hold a post-mortem inquest on some popular tune of yester-year, in the hope of discovering what it died of; and to compare with it some lusty little classic tune that bids fair to be a musical Methuselah. Suppose we rub away the cobwebs and try our scalpels on the piece called *Hiawatha* which had such a short, violent life and even more violent death eight or nine years ago.

We notice first of all that this repulsive dead thing is of almost the same length as the famous Air from Bach's *D Major Suite* for orchestra. Why should the one group of notes have lasted only a year and the other be still young at two hundred?

Because, in the first place, nobody was ever obliged to work in order to grasp the content of *Hiawatha*. It was as easy as a

soap advertisement. Its charms were as obvious, its prettinesses as frankly held up to all men's view as those of the ballet in that fetching tone-drama, *The Follies of 1911*, now drawing packed houses on Broadway. Per contra, it had no veiled, inscrutable Mona Lisa smile. It aroused none of the hope that springs eternal in the human breast. In five minutes you knew it for what it was; nor, though you had continued digging in that mine till you were as old as the Air itself, would you ever have discovered one hidden gleam of precious metal, for the reason that all the gilding was on the surface. The mine was "salted."

The immense popularity of *Hiawatha* was due in part to humanity's eagerness to get something for nothing. But people never long appreciate that for which they have never made sacrifices: a truth which charity organizations and settlements are beginning to learn. The thing was too easy. Hence people dropped it as unceremoniously as they

are accustomed to drop the gushing stranger who pours out the story of his heart for your benefit between stations. It was too obvious. It had none of that mysterious reserve which, as woman so happily shows us, is one of the supremest of all wearing qualities. Its grasp so far exceeded its reach that you were convinced it had nothing up its sleeve. In this respect it stood to the Bach Air as the poems of Tupper stood to the poems of Robert Browning.

Again, *Hiawatha* did not wear well because it was made of poor materials, — pieced together pretty much anyhow out of tiny scraps from the rag-bag of the past. The melodies were no larger than microbes. The harmony was what the theory-professors would call "three-legged." That is to say, it could not hobble far beyond the limitations of the mouth-organ. Its stock of harmonic expressions was no more opulent than the compendious vocabulary of a four-year-old. Its monotony hypnotized the public like

staring at a flickering candle-flame. The little phrases repeated themselves in nervous flutters, as though Hiawatha had contracted Saint Vitus's dance or had spent a week in Wall Street. And so the cheap, stunted, tawdry little tune rolled a short while from soul to kindred soul, making itself very much at home in the breast of business America, spreading itself out large there and leaving barely standing room for such things as Bach's old Air. But the Air did not mind. It knew that real melody is the divinest thing man ever created and that itself was one of the longest, most perfect melodies in existence. Why should a melody that falls like Aphrodite's glorious hair over the fitting harmonies of Aphrodite's body mind if the stock-broker's heart is set instead on the rat that crowns the slatternly and consumptive Bridget?

The Bach Air is original; *Hiawatha*, reminiscent. Theft will out, even though it is perfectly unconscious. The public seems to

have a sharp intuition for it, though not at once, — another reason for the violent lives and more violent deaths of its Hiawathas.

People often pay the Air the highest of unconscious tributes in exclaiming, "Now, why didn't I think of that myself? It seems so inevitable!" They never say that about the Hiawathas. They exclaim over their cleverness or catchiness and, after a few months, they suddenly sicken of them and realize that the parts which had not been plagiarized are as strained as the plot of a bad short-story by a writer who knows nothing about life.

The Air is perfectly simple, yet unostentatiously rich. Hiawatha is like a gay young Sicilian dandy without a copper to his name, but powdered, rouged, waxed, and tricked out in a pound of plated jewelry. He has just been spending two or three hours in bed while his old mother washed and pressed his only pair of white flannel trousers. And as for less conspicuous apparel — !

Again, Bach packed his Air with true sentiment. That is to say, he breathed into it for all time such a wealth of love and reverence, of faith and hope and joy in man and nature that we find there immortalized a generous portion of the true emotion of the race. There is no such thing as sentiment in Hiawatha's system, but his well-oiled hair, his beringed hands, and those whited sepulchres, his clothes, reek with sentimentality.

In the Air the nobility, the yearning, the repressed fire, — the whole tremendous emotional element, is sustained by a strong and profoundly wrought intellectual framework. This untrammeled revelation of the heart of man was conveyed through one of the most exacting mediums known to the science of music, the passacaglia, a form as difficult for the composer as is the double ballade or the Chant Royal for the poet. The structure of Bach's *tour de force* will repay unlimited study. Each measure is finished like a piece of mosaic. Every part is as functional, yet as

freely worked out as one of the organic parts of a Gothic chapel. And one stands with bared head amid that rich intricate simplicity, hardly knowing which is giving him greater pleasure, the tracery and noble lines of the shafts and sustaining arches, or the sweetness and light pouring in through the rose window. As for the perpetrator of *Hiawatha*, he erected a gaudy summer house on the sands. And though he put little enough intellect into its construction, he put so much less real emotion there that it was all out of equilibrium from the first. Then the rains descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, — and the event did not even get a line in the newspapers. For it was a mighty poor house anyway and it was founded upon the sand of ephemeral vogue.

Further, the Air, for all its dynamic energy, has about it a large repose, — the repose of the Parthenon, of a Rembrandt portrait, of the Elgin Marbles. Just as no sculptor ex-

pects enduring appreciation for a statue that is modeled in a strained, unnatural posture, so no composer expects immortality for music into which he cannot infuse that central calm subsisting forever at the heart even "of endless agitation." As for *Hiawatha*, it has about as much repose as a child's paper whirligig on a windy day.

One last consideration — for we must end our inquest somewhere. The Bach Air is beautiful. *Hiawatha* is merely pretty. And this prettiness is of the ephemeral kind that may, to-morrow or a week from to-morrow, wilt away before one's eyes into downright ugliness. But the Air has the hardy sort of beauty possessed by an Egyptian scarab. All that the blowing sands of Time can do is merely to polish it up to a higher lustre.

Now all art criticism is more or less a matter of individual temperament. Absolute canons of criticism are almost as hard to come at as "lines of beauty" or "the average man." When I declare a Brahms quartet

to be like a granite quarry veined with gold, I mean that this is true for the first person, but not necessarily for the second or third. To you, gentle amateur, Brahms may be as naïvely, dully unalluring as Romberg is to me. To your taste the rhapsodies of Liszt may be as richly simple as a Bach chorale is to mine.

However that may be, the foregoing speculations about the wearing qualities of music are not trying to fetter the free play of any one's personal opinion. They are simply endeavoring to supply the writer and others of kindred tastes with laboratory facilities and testing apparatus and a rough working method for the practice of musical fortune-telling.

If we should take the body of classical music (that is, the music that has lived), and compare it with the masses of dead music in our attic cemeteries, and should then bring to bear on this somewhat the same sort of reasoning by which a life insurance actuary constructs those curious tables that can tell

anybody his "expectation of life," — we would, in my opinion, construct tables something like the following, which would help us to predict how many centuries, or hours, any given composer might reasonably be expected to live.

QUALITIES THAT WEAR	
WELL:	ILL:
Subtlety	Obviousness
Reserve	Exaggeration and gush
Variety	Monotony
Originality	Reminiscence
Inevitability	The strained
Simple opulence	Flamboyant poverty
Sentiment	Sentimentality
Balance between intellectual and emotional elements	No balance between intellectual and emotional elements
Repose	Restlessness
Beauty	Prettiness and ugliness

The most I have hoped to do here is to suggest a practical sort of apparatus and a

rough working method that may, sometime, somewhere, be used as stepping stones to higher things. So that one of these days a musical actuary may arise, so intimately in touch with the eternal verities that he can take each rising composer and pronounce infallibly upon his "expectation of life." And if the composers only have reverence enough for the authority of this actuary — who knows? — perhaps some future Hiawathist may take the criticisms so to heart as to correct his own failings, and disprove the critical croakings of the sage, — as Mr. Horace Fletcher disproved the croakings of the insurance doctors, — and thus win such immortality as fell to the creator of the Air in D.

XIII

MY ROD AND MY STAFF

As for the rod, it is just the plain, five ounce affair of split bamboo that goes nearly everywhere with me. It shall be spared, — and you. My traveler's staff is what I would celebrate.

It is the most remarkable staff that ever propped pilgrim. But I have to confess at once that it boasts none of the common virtues of staves. It is not stout, not trusty, not particularly good to behold. It rejoices neither in an iron toe nor in a fantastically carved head. In the mouth of a fop it is wormwood and gall. It has never been of the slightest aid amid bristling Dolomites or arduous Appalachians, although it has on several occasions, it is true, helped me up inconsiderable stretches of "the steep ascent." And though it is the very thing wherewith to beckon spirits like Ariel to do one's be-

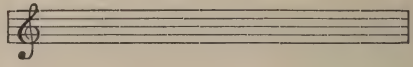
hest, it is practically worthless when some too radically conservative watch-dog is to be held at bay.

It fact, to the traveler's gross, material body while in the act of careering through the Bædekernian system from star to star, mine is of all staves most worthless. Gentle amateur, I perceive you in the act of asking what earthly good my traveler's staff is, anyhow. Well, to be frank, none at all until after you return from your travels. You know how that brilliant epigram which you really ought to have improvised at dinner never refulges until you reach home?

So with my staff. But then,—ah *then*, it is metamorphosed like lightning into a magic wand with all the power of a genuine wishing-mat to transport you in no time to the very heart of the most stirring, sublime, melancholy or beautiful scene that you have ever known.

Some coarse carpers have accused my staff of cutting a doubtful figure, of looking, in

fact, like a prison-pen. But any really gentle reader will at once comprehend that it took this



shape simply in order to confine each elusive *genius loci* where you may find him at a moment's notice.

I trust that all this makes it clear that my staff is sort of musical diary of travel, — a device by the grace of which, when you have scratched down that fragment of melody you happened to hear the band play one golden afternoon in front of San Marco, you will never lose the miraculous power of summoning up at will the whole Venetian vision. My traveler's staff is the place where it takes you about thirty seconds to record a certain bit of Hungarian dance that floated up from the steerage the day after the great storm and that now connotes you the seven seas and especially yourself with your arm about

How is it that five notes of that old Bedouin chant epitomize for you the unimaginable reaches of the Sahara? Less than an octave; less than half a measure, — yet they compass Africa from shore to shore.

The reason for this phenomenon is that the blessed law of association never works with more charm and potency than in collaboration with my staff. Music, as a record of travel, is incomparably superior to words. It is so much more sincere and spontaneous; so much more concise and complete. Words, at best, are obstinate, artificial, unplastic, impudent, hostile things, as we writers know full well. And in making a diary of them you have to knead phrases and mould sentences and cast paragraphs, during which processes your precious cruse of spontaneity is apt to spring a-leak. Then, when all is written, you have probably expressed, — and very ill — some scene widely different from the scene you sought to express, bathed in a light that never was on land or sea.

A musical diary, on the other hand, does not have to be composed. Its stuff lies ready. A few scratches, and there the record stands, forever fresh, forever poignant and thrilling. For music is a sublimated sponge that eagerly drinks up all the fluid manifestations of nature and art about it.

I am perfectly aware of the current belief that the nose is the special organ of memory, and that the champions of this theory suppose that there is such a compound word as "remini-scent." And I know of one victim of *Wanderlust* whose diary consists of such wander-notes as a faded rose-petal from the south of France, a wafer of Edam cheese, a fragrant, wine-soaked menu from Orvieto. There a hop-blossom stands for Nuremberg, and a dash of crude oil for Cleveland, Ohio.

Indeed, the unique excellence of such scent-records of past pleasures were mellifluously urged not long ago by an *Atlantic* contributor whose style made one marvel that a nature so musical should not already have

divined the superior advantages of my traveler's staff. But *de odoribus!* — At any rate there are hosts of travelers who are built psychologically on auditory rather than scent-uous lines. And for them, at least, by as much as their ears surpass their noses in sensibility, by so much will my form of travel-record surpass the nasal in completeness and potency. Those of them, moreover, who keep a musical pharmacy will at once see the advisability of adding my staff as a specific against *Wanderlust*.

This surely will not be disputed, that mine is the most concentrated of all material notebooks. Compared with it the stenographer's is encyclopædic. It has scarcely anything to do with matter at all. It is well-nigh pure spirit. Who wields my traveler's staff may sum up the grandeur that was Rome on his thumb-nail; all Europe on the back of a visiting-card.

An old friend of mine who drives a stage out West is the kind of musician who takes

no stock in written music. "Them there notes" are to him "jest like so many darnin' needles stuck up in knot-holes, with a few strips o' rag flutterin' from the ends." My friend "jest goes it by ear." So would I if I had his Homeric memory, and then my diary would become absolutely pure spirit. But this effete memory of mine needs continual jogging. A very small handful of those same darning needles, however, can construct me a more vivid tapestry of Athens, say, than whole columns of the very choicest words in Roget.

For instance, as I take up my diary a fragment of the Greek National March appears. Without warning I am lolling again in the real Stadium, enjoying the play of color and emotion over that beautiful concourse of sixty thousand, set off by the creamy marble benches cut from Mount Pentelicon. And now as the shadows of the superb young runners and wrestlers below begin to lengthen, I rise again to saunter

past the mellow columns of the Olympeium, wondering how they can manage to keep on ignoring the neighboring tennis courts with such unruffled dignity; catching as I stroll, from a quiet, musical voice here and there, some word straight out of Homer, some phrase that might have almost come from Pindar or Sappho or Sophocles. Then the joy of stumbling upon the Theatre of Dionysos and of resting on the very spot where Æschylus may have suffered agonies during the *première* of the *Prometheus*, while the crumbling stage is quick once more with Thebes and Pelops' line. Crowning all to wander through the sacred precinct of Æsculapius, and past the hill dedicated to memories of the mighty tent-maker, toward where the setting sun is repainting the Parthenon with a more than Attic art.

My musical diary happens to have been kept on the margin of a note-book written in laborious words. As I turn the pages carelessly a theme looks out labeled "London,"

a bit of a Beethoven sonata, to prove once more that my staff, abandoning the grand manner, is quite as able to draw with loving fidelity one of those human little illustrations that are the despair of writers and often mean so much more to us than the panoramas of Claude Lorraine. Cecelia and I had been playing that sonata together the evening before we ran up to town for a lark from the meadows of Windsor. Through the Wallace and the Abbey and the Inner Temple the theme followed us. Even an overdue luncheon hour could not discourage it (though when hungry we are usually pestered by the very tawdriest of tunes), and Cecelia, Beethoven, and I turned up Fleet Street together at two, quite ignorant of good restaurants, and almost ravenous enough to resort to the Aërated Bread Company, though we felt that nothing short of the Mermaid Tavern could fitly finish that morning.

All at once Cecelia spied a print of Reynolds' Johnson in a window full of cobwebs.

A wall-sign promised food. I darted up Wine Office Court to reconnoitre. One look was enough. Another moment and we were seated on an ancient settle over a sanded floor in a cosier, quainter room than stay-at-home Americans could imagine. Not till we had ordered did we notice a familiar Reynolds canvas. Presently a small brass plate came to light over a corner bench which, as it stated, was the favorite seat of Dr. Samuel Johnson.

> "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken,"—

while Cecelia, "in a wild surmise," concluded that our usual luck must have led us straight to "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese." At the same instant Beethoven hurdled the scherzo and slow movement and broke with a whoop of exultation into his own jubilant *finale;* while the waiter bawled upstairs, "Cook, send down two beefsteak-and-kidney pies!"

As is natural the musical themes cluster thickest in the records of years in the father-

land of music. How this bar of Chopin *polonaise* brings to life again Danzig's glamorous riverside, the old port of Poland, with its tower-gates and its cowardly "Long Bridge" that never leaves the land. And for me the Rondo in Mozart's *G major Trio* is simply the stately *Herrenstrasse* of Rothenburg, translated, every dear stone of it, into tone.

Curiously enough, no German music, but, instead, a theme of Saint-Saens has the power to evoke the "holy" city of Cologne as I last beheld it, at dusk, from the bridge of boats. The olive water slaps and gurgles between the battered, blue punts, and swings the green rudders in regular rhythm. The romantic rows of sharp old gables along the right bank take an added charm in the softening light, backed as they are by the Rathaus belfry and looking confidently up to old Saint Martin's tower, massive, four-square above them. Symbolically enough, Saint Martin's seems from ere to rise higher than the great cathedral itself which is shrouded in a light mist and stands

out against banks of lavender cloud, broken here and there to let through the last rosy gleams of day. The spires are at their loveliest. The unrest of the multitudinous detail is lost. They seem no longer new and a little hard. They have become the symbol of that spirit of beauty whose dearest child is Gothic. A puff or two of white and slate-colored smoke rises from the railroad station. A train of golden light skims across the Rhine. A boat full of happy river life makes fast. I catch the buoyant Rhenish laughter of the folk hastening toward me, up into the city of their love. But I will not follow them just now. I will stand a little longer, an eddy in the bright-faced throng, and bathe myself in beauty.

There are a few rare melodic entries in the diary, more illuminating, more vividly reminiscent than any others. A melody of this kind does not seem to owe its suggestive power to any accident of nearness in space or time to the scene it suggests. It simply comes and

takes possession of the spot by a sort of natural right as if revisiting its birthplace. I am fond of thinking that these uncalled melodies came into being under conditions like those which re-created them for me, somewhat as *The Eve of Saint Agnes* was born again in Kipling's *Wireless*.

Never again shall we hear the Andante of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* without remembering how it occurred spontaneously to us one Christmas morning in Girgenti as we were strolling down a path of pure sunlight, dreamy with the first almond blossoms and purple iris. Senile prickly pears leered like gargoyles over the crumbling walls. The portal and pillared orange gardens of San Nicola lay behind, — the glory of old Greece and of young Sicily, before. In a recent roadside cutting were strewn fragments of the pottery of four civilizations. The whole country-side, fertilized with the decay of ancient cultures, bloomed like an English garden in June. In a far valley a goat-herd struck up, on such a reed

as Theocritus once fingered, a melancholy sweet tune of long ago. But that is not the melody which can bring us back at will to our Sicilian slope. For, just as the harmony of the temple of Concord burst upon us, we became conscious of that Andante pervading the incomparable scene like the sunlight, breathed through all like the ether, under all like the strength of the hills. Even now it lets us feel again, as nothing else can, the thrill of finding that little terra-cotta head amid the bleaching bones of Hercules' temple, or the delight of lunching in the noble portico of Concord while the sun burnished the Mediterranean far below on the left, and crowned on the right the city that clung to the hill.

On the highest peak of Capri, one flaming sunset time, among the ruins of a castle of Tiberius the genius of the place was awaiting me, embodied in the fiery, sweeping second theme from the scherzo of the Brahms quintet. No painter could possibly get on canvas a panorama such as that tone-picture shows

me now: the molten sun set in cloud-peaks of glowing lava, threatening the fair green fields of the Mediterranean, flushing to a delicate rose the snow-mountains above Sorrento and the steaming mantle of Vesuvius and the sweep of the frosty Apennines;—clothing that divine coast from Pæstum to Gaeta in all the hues of the rainbow. Far out at sea the Ponzas looked like the very Isles of the Blest. I gazed, remembering how Brahms loved Italy, and the conviction was born that the master could have conceived that theme nowhere else than on the pinnacle of Monte Solaro.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the pervasive power of music becomes a curse on one's travels. *Hiawatha* dogged me through every delicious foot of Ravello as persistent and annoying as the slave who, attending the Roman emperor on his triumph, kept hissing into his ear depressing reminders of his mere mortality. The rich atmosphere of Weimar was tainted by a noisome Ganne mazurka

which I contracted there. And the mere mention of Saint Cloud still releases within me the spring of a music box that will grind out by the morning a shoddy piano piece by Sinding.

Even here, however, the law of compensation works amiably. For in after years it is the shoddy music that is ennobled for one by its noble association, not the place that is cheapened.

But suppose, dear amateurs of music, that your traveling days have definitely ended without its ever occurring to you to keep such a concise and vivid record of your wanderings as a musical diary. No matter! The most uninspired writers in the world have collaborated with the law of association to write you an inspired commentary on the whole route.

You doubt me? Just step to the music cupboard and take down that dusty, superannuated instrument of torture, an old book of exercises. (For every one of you has doubt-

less "taken" music at some time or other, even if with no more relish than so much castor oil.) Behold, you are about to be repaid. Look well at the ugly lines of "knot-holes" and see whether every single one does not bring back some memory of your months of apprenticeship. "All thoughts, all passions, all delights," whatever stirred your mortal frame in the old years, — all have been recorded in a kind of sympathetic ink on these dull pages. Just warm them up a little with your hand and see how the days that are no more will start out of the paper.

Suppose that you, my professional friend, have grown very dull playing the 'cello in a monotonous theatre orchestra, and long for nothing so much as to revisit Berlin and the joyous scenes of your studious youth, — a luxury that orchestral incomes by no means permit. You have but to open your Duport studies again. They will catch you there in a trice; though, curiously enough, pedantic old Duport will have more to relate about your

moments of relaxation than of the stuffy mornings of toil in the hall bedroom giving on the courtyard where old women used to beat carpets eight hours a day.

A novel entertainment it is indeed to hear grim, formal Grützmacher raise his head from a chaos of thumb scales and broken chords to declare

"Midnights of revel
And noondays of song;
Is it so wrong?
Go to the devil!"

Those detestable yellow pages make excellent reading, you see; and the print is enlivened with pictures. Here you are on your back beneath the pines at Wannsee, listening to the surf overhead. There you are enjoying the grotesque flounderings of the natives "*beim Tennis-spiel.*" Or it is January and you are skimming the steel-blue ice out towards Potsdam. Then you come back to music with a start. The master has just complimented you on the purity of your octaves and offered to get you a position in the Philharmonic. But

you think not. She has just finished with Carreño, — your little pianist in Charlottenburg, and has engaged passage. Well, after all, America is good enough for you.

Would you, my lady, recapture the first fine careless rapture of those two youthful years in Paris? Pray open your musty Clementi and kneel again on the lowest of those "*Gradus ad Parnassum*," — the toilsome steps to that illusory Parnassus which you were destined never quite to reach.

A gown floats before your eyes, blurring the notes, — a ball-gown with appoggiaturas about the sleeves, arpeggios down the sides, a tremendous diminuendo at the waist, and a hold where the neck should be. Turn the well-worn page and there *he* is (in the middle of that octave drill) whirling you around to the strains of the most ravishing, most un-Clementi-ish of waltzes. The next three graduses appear to be parts of a moving stairway, — they whisk you up towards Parnassus so fast. In one bewitching study old Clem

actually depicts moonlight, the fragrance of spring flowers, and two under the drooping branches of Fontainebleau Forest while training the hands to a gentle, legato movement. Abruptly follows a fiendish discord, worthy of D'Indy which hurls hero and heroine into the slough of despond in the middle of page twenty-one. Then comes a passage much like the battle scene from *Ein Heldenleben* where the hands play in different keys. (Striking how Dry-as-dust has forestalled the moderns!) The next gradus was composed to the text

"Tired with all these for easeful death I sigh,"

varied by flurries of staccato anger. Suddenly you are startled by a shocking dissonance. Those five consecutive, simultaneous notes will always remain for you, however, the most beautiful effect in music. Your startled fingers fell at random, you know, and played the lost chord just at the top of page thirty-nine. He took a mean advantage, coming up behind and popping his hands

over your eyes! No, Clem's diary-writing ends with that chord. What follows is quite meaningless.

A quaint figure they cut, — these crabbed old music-masters in their flowered dressing-gowns, blossoming out so late in life with their wonderful literary talents. Yet it surely seems a beautiful thing that they who slaved so faithfully to help us do their more gifted brothers justice should have their bleached, rattling bones galvanized into life at the Elijah-like touch of association; and that Romberg and Kreutzer, Czerny and Kummer, Plaidy and Pleyel and Popp should march at the last in the glorious company of inspired, creative artists.

How jolly that the faithful, dusty old chaps with the sedentary souls should, after all, turn out to be such potent poets of travel that they may snatch us at will to the ends of the earth.

XIV

A DEFENSE OF AMATEUR WHISTLING

WHISTLING girls and crowing hens are bracketed together by the wisdom of the ages, but "bad ends" are allotted these ladies, because they have not as yet learned to perform in tune, not from anything inherently wrong with whistling *per se*. Unfortunately the proverb has, however, by a fatal association of ideas, reflected on a noble art.

Because girls and newsboys pipe "ragtime" without regard to the diatonic scale, why should my avocation be banned by polite society? It would be no more absurd to consider singing *outré* because burly baritones persist in roaring "Wake not, but hear me, Love!" at morning concerts; or to put the piano down as vulgar because a certain type of person is always whanging Chaminade

out of season. (For my part, I have never discovered Chaminade's season; but then I am only a fiddler.) It may be, though, that polite society's aversion to the amateur whistle, proceeds in part from the same lazy impulse that banned reading and writing in the Middle Ages as not quite the thing, — as a demeaning business fit only for clerks, scriveners and such-like low persons. I wonder how many members of America's smartest sets could, if necessary, whistle for the cure of their souls a single immortal melody from the Schubert quintet as they stroll down the Avenue in the cool of the day. Perhaps, however, it is a mere sour grape that has puckered up their mouths so wryly. And everybody knows that it is as hard to whistle with a taste like that in your mouth as to play the flute while watching somebody bite into a lemon.

My avocation consists in whistling to myself the most beautiful melodies in existence, and I go about in a state of perpetual won-

der that no one else does likewise. Never yet have I heard a passing stranger whistling anything worth while; but I have my plans all laid for the event. The realization of that whistle will come with a shock like the one Childe Roland felt when something clicked in his brain, and he had actually found the dark tower. I hope I shall not be

> "a-dozing at the very nonce,
> After a life spent training for the"

sound, and so lose my man among the passers-by. When I hear him I shall chime in with the second violin or 'cello part perhaps, or, if he has stopped, I shall pipe up the answering melody. Of course he will be just as much on the alert as I have been, and will search eagerly for me in the crowd, and then we shall go away together, and be crony-hearts forever after. I am constantly constructing romances, each with this identical beginning, for what could be more romantic than to find by chance the only other

one in all the world who shared your pet hobby? But I am ageing in the quest, and sometimes fear that I may never find my stranger, though I attain the years and the technic of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

The human whistle is the most delightfully informal of instruments. It needs no inglorious lubrication of joints and greasing of keys like its dearest relative the flute. It is not subject to the vocalist's eternal cold. It knows no *inferno* of tuning and snapping strings, nor does it need resin for its stomach's sake and its often infirmities. Its only approach to the baseness of mechanism is in a drainage system akin to that of the French horn, though far less brazen in its publicity.

I love my whistle quite as much as I love my 'cello, but in a different way. They stand, the one to the other, very much in the relation of my little, profanely-extra-illustrated school Horace to that magnificent codex of the heaven-knows-what-th century, the gem of my library. The former goes with a black

pipe and a holiday, with luncheon under a bush by a small trout stream; the latter implies scholarship, or else visitors and Havana cigars.

One of the best qualities of the whistle is that it is so portable. The whistler may not even have rings on his fingers, but he shall have music wherever he goes; and to carry about the wealth of Schubert and Beethoven and Chopin is more to me than much fine gold. Brahms is one of the most whistle-able optimists I know. And, whenever I feel particularly down- and wish to feel up-in-the-mouth, whistle and I go a little journey on one of those "lone heaths" recommended by Hazlitt, and there whistle all the Brahms themes we can remember. We will begin perhaps with concertos, then run through the chamber music and songs (which I prefer without words), reserving the overtures, suites, choral works, and symphonies for a climax. The most ultramarine devils could hardly resist the contagious optimism of a Brahms

whistling-bout, and I believe that if Schopenhauer, "that prince of miserabilists," had practiced the art, it would have made him over into a Stanley Hall.

Whistling to keep up the courage has passed into a proverb, but the Solomons have said nothing about whistling to keep up the memory. Yet nothing is better practice for the automusician than the game of "Whist-le." A. whistles a melody. If B. can identify it, he wins the serve. If he cannot, A. scores one. If the players have large repertories, the field should be narrowed down to trios, or songs, or perhaps first movements of symphonies. I still feel the beneficent effects of the time when I used to sit with my chum in a Berlin café into the small hours, racking my brain and my lips to find a theme too recondite for him.

For such purposes the whistle is exquisitely adapted. One often hears it remarked that the 'cello is almost human; but the whistle is absolutely human and, unlike the

'cello, is not too formal to take along on a lark. Though it cannot sing to others

"Of infinite instincts, — souls intense that yearn,"

it will stick loyally and cheerily by you through thick and thin, like

"the comrade heart
For a moment's play,
And the comrade heart
For a heavier day,
And the comrade heart
Forever and aye."

The whistle is one of the surest tests of musical genius. Not that the divine spark lurks behind truly puckered lips, but you may be sure that something is amiss with that composer whose themes cannot be whistled; although, of course, the converse will not hold. He lacks that highest and rarest of the gifts of God, — melody. Certain composers nowadays, with loud declarations that this is the Age of Harmony, are trying to slur over their fatal lack by calling melody antiquated, a thing akin to perukes and bustles.

By changing the key twice in the measure, they involve us so deep in harmonic quicksands as to drown, momentarily, even the memory of Schubert. If this school prevails it will, of course, annihilate my avocation, for I have known but one man who could whistle harmony, and even he could not soar beyond thirds and sixths. I shudder when I imagine him attacking a D'Indy tone-poem.

The whistle has even wider possibilities than the voice. It is quite as perfect and natural an instrument, and generously exceeds the ordinary compass of the voice. It can perform harder music with more ease and less practice. It has another advantage: in whistling orchestral music, the "drum-traps," the double-bass, the bassoon may be "cued in" very realistically and with little interruption by means of snores, shuffles, grunts, wheezes, clucks, *et cetera*.

The whistle's chief glory is that it is human, yet single. Sometimes, especially during certain operas, I am inclined to think that

when Music was "married to Immortal Verse" she made a *mésalliance*. The couple seldom appear to advantage together; their "winding bouts" are sad public exhibitions of conjugal infelicity. Instead of coöperating, each misrepresents and stunts the other's nature. Both insist on talking at the same time, so that you can understand neither one plainly, and, as is generally the case, the lady gets in the first and last word, and shouts poor I. V. down between whiles. You would scarcely take her, as she strides about red-faced and vociferous, for the goddess to whom you gave your heart when she was a maiden. But there, you must remember that I am only a fiddler who likes his music "straight."

The whistle has almost as many different qualities of tone as the voice, although it is so young as to be still in the boy-chorister stage. Who can predict the developments of the art after its change of whistle? I, for one, fear that it will be introduced into the

symphony orchestra before long, and this, I am sure, will make it vain, and destroy its young *naïveté*, and its delicious informality. It would be like punching holes into my dear old black pipe, fitting it with a double reed, and using it in the future works of Debussy as a kind of piccolo-oboe. I go about furtively looking at conductors' scores for fear I may see something like this : —

Whistle I
Whist. II
Whist. Profondo.

But with all my heart I hope that my avocation may not be formalized until after I have hung up the fiddle and the bow on the staff of my life as a sort of double-bar.

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